

THE OLD RAUHE HAUS

THE ROMANCE OF CHARITY

By JOHN DE LIEFDE



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⁂ *This book will be found to contain the substance of the large work, "Six Months among the Charities of Europe," by the same Author.*

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THE RAUHE HAUS AT HORN.

(NEAR HAMBURG.)

I.

How I found the Rauhe Haus, and what it was Thirty-two Years ago — Wichern and his First Family.

ON a bright autumn morning in 1864 I found myself sitting in the omnibus that plies regularly between Hamburg and the little neighbouring village of Horn. After half-an-hour's drive along a road lined on each side with leafless trees, the coachman alighted from his box, and, courteously opening the door, told me that the narrow footpath, at the entrance of which we stopped, led to the Rauhe Haus. He also said something about "steps," but, before I could ask particulars, he was again enthroned. The lumbering vehicle then turned its back upon me, and I found myself alone at the bottom of a rising footpath, which on the left was walled in by an elevated field rising four or five feet above my head. After having climbed up a few yards I noticed some stone steps cut in this earthen wall; but, as I did not know what the coachman had said about them, and they looked rather dirty and slippery, I preferred walking on

by the footpath, which I calculated would soon bring me to a level with the field. And so it was. In a few minutes I found myself on a wide tract of ground, dotted here and there with farms and groves and fields, extending as far as my eye could see. But there was no building visible near or far that looked like a reformatory or any such establishment. The nearest house which I saw to my left seemed to be a farm-house, with a garden and a barn. Behind it I noticed the steeple of a church. This, I thought, is most likely a hamlet of the village of Horn. But where in the world is the Rauhe Haus?

There were a dozen boys playing in a field at a small distance. As they were the only human beings to be seen within three miles round, nothing was left for me but to consult them.

"*Wo ist das Rauhe Haus?*" I asked them.

They looked up rather doggedly, without stopping their game, and gave no answer.

"Don't you know where the Rauhe Haus is?" I repeated rather impatiently.

"No;" some voices cried, and on went the game.

"Did anybody ever see the like of this?" I said to myself. "It is really too absurd that I should have to come all the way from London to tell these boys that there is such a thing here as the Rauhe Haus."

"But don't you really know the house where all the boys are kept?" I cried. They must know *that*, at any rate, I thought.

"Ah, you mean the Ruge Hoos!" several boys cried in a strong *patois* accent. "Why, there it is, just before you."

They pointed to the house which I had taken for a

farm-house. I now saw that the mistake was mine. The name Rauhe Haus, which in German means *rough* house, is an awkward translation of the original *patois* name into the more aristocratic German. The house was built some one or two hundred years ago, by a certain Mr. Ruge, who was, perhaps, as little of a rough fellow as need be. The people had known it ever since by the name of its founder, "Ruge's house;" but as the *Platt-Deutsch* or Saxon word *ruge* is the same as the English *rough* and the Dutch *ruig*, learned men thought that it ought to be translated by the corresponding German word *rauh*, just as the French tourist translated "Coward House" by *la Maison du poltron*. The boys, however, knew nothing of this scientific development, and continued to call the house by the name which good old Mr. Ruge had thought proper to give it. *Sancta simplicitas!*

I retraced my steps to the gate which led to the supposed farm-house. No sooner had I reached its front door than a charming view presented itself. An extensive garden, planted with elms, chestnut-trees, old sturdy oaks, and other trees and shrubs, and laid out like a park, was lying within the range of a dozen houses of various sizes and shapes, scattered over an area of about twelve or fifteen acres. Broad well-hoed and raked paths, covered with yellow sand, wound elegantly round the green grass plots towards the arable patches of land, whose dark-brown hue loomed up in the distance. In the centre of this little Eden a church-like building, of an elegant but simple construction, stood out, pointing with its slender steeple towards

that world where a still fairer Paradise blossoms. A perfectly still autumn day spread its peaceful spirit over the whole landscape, as if lulling it asleep after the fatigues of a busy summer. Nor was there any living creature noticeable at the moment. The whole scene exhibited such an image of peace and happiness as one is prepared to enjoy when witnessing the wonderful works of Christian faith and charity.

So this was the Rauhe Haus; not one large building merely, but a number of buildings, with gardens and woodland, and fields; in fact, a whole colony. Of course, I should have been prepared for this, after having read Stevenson's admirable and detailed description of the grand institution.* But, such is the power of words, that when hearing the name *Rauhe Haus*, you cannot help thinking of one building only, until by sight you rectify the false impression of the sound. The original Rauhe House is still to be seen—that venerable cottage, with the thatched roof and wood-framed walls, sheltered under the broad foliage of a gigantic chestnut-tree. It is almost breaking down under the weight of old age, although faithfully propped by the repairing skill of grateful piety. For no *Rauhhäusler*—such is the name the denizens of this colony go by—from the first teacher down to the smallest child, can forget that this was the roof under which Dr. Wichern, then a young Candidat,† and his mother, and the first boys whom he plucked out of the fire of moral perdition, spent their happy years, till

* *Praying and Working*, pp. 61–196.

† *Candidat*—a theological student who has passed his examination at the university, and is licensed to take orders.



IMMANUEL WICHERN

the house was full, and a second, and a third, and a twelfth were built. In those days this small farm-cottage was the only building here. Surrounded by a few acres of ground, and fenced in by a high earthen wall, it was dull, gloomy-looking, and convent-like.

Hamburg is well known to the merchant and the banker, but not less to the spendthrift and the man of pleasure. Statistics of 1848 show that out of every five children born one was illegitimate. And the peep into the condition of the lower and poor class, which further statistics give, is something quite horrible. Preparations for that great work of the Inner Mission, of which Wichern was by Providence destined to be the representative, if not the father, were already made by such men as Falck at Weimar, Zeller at Beuggen, and Count von der Recke Volmerstein at Overdyk. They had established *Rettungshäuser*, *i.e.*, houses of refuge and redemption for the abandoned and neglected children, the offspring of sin and profligacy, of misery and destitution. Their example fired the mind of the young Candidat, so that he could get no rest till a similar institution was provided for Hamburg. Gold and silver he had not, nor had he influence with the princes of this world; but he had something better. His was the faith that conquers the world, and the love stronger than death. As a Sunday-school teacher, and as a visitor of the poor, he had become acquainted with the awful corruption that pervaded all classes of society, but especially the lower. That neither the Church nor the State was able to cure this frightfully increasing evil was at once clear to him. Free Christian charity could alone be the physician here. A Rettungshaus must

be founded for rescuing at least the children, since the case of the adults was hopeless. Not *in* Hamburg, of course, for that would be keeping the children in the very atmosphere they ought to be removed from; but *near* Hamburg, somewhere down in the country, where fresh air and wholesome labour would invigorate the body, and a Christian family life, carried on with patriarchal simplicity, would revive the spirit.

These were the thoughts which on one October evening in 1832 he discussed with his friends, the members of the Visiting Society—men like himself, richer in faith and love than in silver and gold. The importance of the matter forced itself so mightily upon their hearts that they solemnly promised one another to give their minds no rest till the Rettungshaus was prayed down from heaven; for praying was the only thing they could do for the present, but this they did with all their heart. When meeting on the street after this, they would whisper into each other's ear: "You don't forget praying for the Rettungshaus, do you?" Such knocks at the door of the heavenly bank were too telling not to be heard. One day a Government secretary, who knew nothing of the matter, handed £15 to one of the friends. It was given to him by a colleague of his, "to be spent for some charitable purpose; if at all possible, for some establishment yet to be founded." A few weeks later, a clergyman, to whom the distribution of a bequest for charitable purposes was entrusted, assigned £1050 to the proposed Rettungshaus. Who can picture to himself the joy of Wichern and his friends? The case having now become publicly known, gifts began to pour in. Even servants

gave their mites; and one mechanic emptied his spare box on the table of one of the friends, covering it with coins of every description, gold, silver, and copper, the savings of many a year's hard labour.

A few days later another table was covered, but with a map instead of money. It was in the village of Horn, and in the parlour of a wealthy landed proprietor, Mr. Sieveking, the syndic. Wichern stood by the table, and looked with a throbbing heart at the map on which Mr. Sieveking pointed to a house and a piece of ground, which he was willing to give for the establishment. Happier than a king, Wichern returned to Hamburg to tell his friends the glad news; but, alas! here he was to experience the truth of the proverb, that between the cup and the lip there is many a slip. The next week the clergyman informed him that he could not pay the £1050, as the bequest was contested at law; and upon further examination it was found that Mr. Sieveking's house and land were unfit for the purpose. People, upon hearing of these disappointments, became discouraged, and many a well-wisher withdrew. It was mooted that the matter was a complete failure; and Wichern and his friends were left alone, just at the point where they were two months ago, when they had plenty of wishes but no money.

But their Heavenly Friend withdrew not. Nor did they withdraw from His footstool. And soon they were delivered from adversity and restored to their former prosperity. The lawsuit ended in their favour; nay, they even received a larger sum than was originally assigned to them. And Mr. Sieveking had no rest either. He

looked again at the map, and again, and his attention fell upon another property of his, called *Ruge Hoos.* But there was no thinking of it, since it was rented for many a year. Still he walked up to the house one morning, just to look at it; and, lo! no sooner had he reached its front door than its tenant met him, with a humble request to be permitted to break the lease and to leave. "Well, I will think over it," Mr. Sieveking said; and the next day Wichern was on the spot, and two hearts were gladdened—that of the tenant by the permission to go out, and that of Wichern by the permission to come in.

Courage now came flying back to the faint-hearted, and the number of well-wishers again increased with the day. Now that Wichern's faith had created money, brick, and mortar—money, brick, and mortar, in their turn created faith among his friends. It is the old story: some men see because they believe, and others believe because they see; and as soon as faith obtains what it sees, both parties may go together a great length. Some say it is only a difference of taste or habit: very well, call it so. But the former are, after all, the blessed;* and rightly so, for *they* do the best and chief part of the work.

A large meeting was held on the 12th of September, 1833, at which resolutions were carried with enthusiastic applause, and a Society formed. On the 1st of November, Wichern, his mother by his side, entered the Rauhe Haus to begin the great work which the Saviour of the lost had prepared for him. Before a week had elapsed

* John xx. 29.

three boys came, and the year had not closed when there were twelve, with which the little house was quite full.

This was the first family. Wichern slept with them in the same bed-room, and took his meals with them in the same parlour. It was not exactly the most agreeable company one could wish for one's pleasure. Eight of them were illegitimate; four were brought up by drunken and criminal parents; one lad was known to the police for ninety-two thefts; one had escaped from prison. They were a lot of young savages, accustomed to live upon robbery, to amuse themselves with hazardous enterprises behind the policeman's back, to sleep under a bridge or on a staircase, to curse their fathers in return for parental curses, and to beat their mothers when scolded for coming home with empty hands. But Wichern and his mother were but too happy to have them. Here was something for which to pray and to suffer, to wrestle and to toil. And what could love more delight in, provided there were some likelihood of saving a few? Certainly it was an arduous task for the young man, who never had such work in hand before. But what he lacked in experience was made up by his kind mother's wisdom. And true genuine love certainly imparts a wonderful talent for the work of training. The problem which was to be grappled with was, how to win the confidence of young liars and thieves who distrusted everybody; how to make obedience a pleasure to young rascals who are resolved to obey nobody; and how to reconcile with an orderly and decent life young vagabonds who claimed the liberty of turning day into

night, of running half-naked about the streets, and of dining off potatoe-skins and other offal, with a pudding of tallow, such as is used for greasing shoes, by way of additional dainty.

The boys learnt from Wichern the existence of that love which is plenteous in forgiveness, which "believeth all things and hopeth all things, endureth all things," and yet "rejoiceth not in iniquity but in truth." Regular labour in the field and in the workshop soon came to be liked as a recreation, and the school teaching as an amusement. Freedom, too, was honoured as a queen. That ugly earth-bank, which enclosed the place like a prison, was dug away amidst loud hurrahs. Everybody could run away now whenever he liked. But nobody did, or the few who tried came back of their own accord. They found, after all, that the Ruge Hoos was the best place anybody could dream of.

One of the most striking proofs that Providence had gifted Wichern with an extraordinary genius for administrative philanthropy, and with uncommon wisdom in the training of children, was afforded by his adoption of the family system, which was afterwards so successfully imitated at the French and Dutch Mettrays. When the old Rauhe Haus was full with its twelve children, he did not think of enlarging it to hold more. He felt that this patriarchal number was quite sufficient for a man to bestow his parental affection and care upon. Though the children never called him by the title of "father"—a hackneyed orphan-house term which he could not bear—yet nevertheless he loved them, and felt concerned about them as a father. But he perceived, too, that he would

come to lose the feeling of a father, if he allowed his family to swell beyond the range which nature has drawn for the duties of a parent. There was room enough for building a house for a second family, and he had no objection to enlarge the place for more houses; but to enlarge the house for more children—never!

"Upon this principle several family-houses were successively built in the course of the ensuing years. They are very pretty little buildings, scattered all over the place in rather irregular order, for the one was built before it was known where the next one was to be located. They take their names from their peculiar form, or from some peculiar event, or other circumstance.

And so there are "The Swiss House," and "The Green Fir," and "The Gold Bottom," and "The Bee-Hive," and several others, all peopled with little families of boys or girls. The custom is introduced of celebrating the anniversary of the foundation of each house in a festival way. Then the house is adorned with wreaths and flowers. The family has a holiday, and a large cake for a treat. The families of the other houses meet with that family at the prayer-room to offer up thanks for the blessings which it has been favoured with during the past year. The history of the foundation, and of some events concerning that house, are read; and thus every family keeps up an interest in its own dwelling-place, while at the same time all the children every year hear an account of the origin and progress of the entire Institution. The histories of these houses are collected into a book called "The Festival Book."

I

The Swiss House—The Green Fir—The Gold Bottom—The Chapel

When people in Hamburg heard that the young Candidat and his twelve little savages were really doing remarkably well, and that it was a happy life over there at the Ruge Hoos, many a one came to admit that, after all, he could not be such a fool as they had at first taken him for. Many a poor parent began earnestly to wish that his wayward boy was one of the twelve, and many a philanthropist, when falling in with a young wretch or vagabond, could not help thinking, "What a blessing it would be to take you to the Candidat!" So applications without number came in during the winter, and had there been ten houses like the old Ruge Hoos, they would all have been filled within a few months. The matter was every day spoken of in the family, and the boys longed for nothing more eagerly than to see a second house rise. "Very well," Wichern said, "but then you must live in it yourselves, and I will take twelve fresh boys in your stead." This was, perhaps, not exactly what they wanted, as they were attached to him heart and soul. But an excellent young teacher had recently arrived from Switzerland and won the heart of the boys, and they thought they would be very happy at the new house if he would come along with them. So the work was resolved upon, and when the mason and the carpenter appeared with their tools and materials, the boys stood ready, axe and spade in hand, to do their

duty with might and main. With merry, sportful activity the whole band assisted, on the 11th of March 1834, in digging up the site of the new building; and at one o'clock the good Syndic Sieveking laid the foundation-stone Now young and old worked away from dawn till dusk, impatient to see the beautiful plan of "The Swiss House" realized. On the 20th of July it was ready, with



The Swiss House

its picturesque outside staircase leading up to the first floor, and its protruding roof and gable. Friends came from Hamburg and other places to see the new building, now adorned like a bride with wreaths and flowery garlands. In its chief parlour there was an organ, a present from a well-wisher, who could not bear the idea that there should be no instrument to accompany the merry songs of the happy Rauh-hausler. It was a joyful festival.

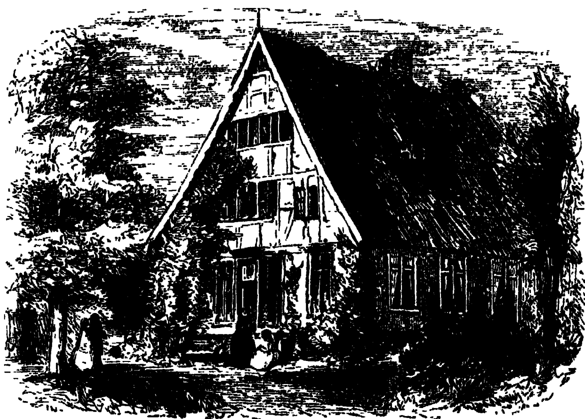
The clergyman of Horn preached a sermon, and many friends present added words of congratulation and encouragement. The next day the twelve boys, their house-father at their head, marched in solemn procession from the old house to the new one. "A new house—a new heart," Wichern said to them on parting. "May all things be new with you henceforth and for ever."

Such were the ceremonies and festivals which were afterwards observed at the construction of every new house. More than thirty years have elapsed since, and many changes have taken place in this Swiss House. At present it is used as the printing office, with the exception of the first floor, which is inhabited by two Brethren and a few boys.

It was not long before Wichern had his number complete again at the old house; and even a third family was springing up, which was temporarily located at the Swiss House, where there were a few rooms unappropriated. But what was urgently wanted was a house for girls. Hitherto none had been received, and this solely from want of accommodation. Besides, a large kitchen was wanted, and a wash-house and an infirmary. It was therefore settled that the best plan would be to build a large house where these apartments could be combined, and which would also have a spacious thrashing-floor to serve at the same time as a meeting-place for family worship—the inmates already amounting to fifty individuals. Wichern could then settle in it with the boys, and leave the old house to the girls. And what was purposed was done. The foundation-stone was laid on the 31st of May 1835, and in October Wichern removed with his

family to the new spacious building, that, some years later, obtained the name of "The Green Fir" (*Die Grüne Tanne*), in honour of the Christmas-tree, which every year proves the centre of such fraternal fellowship, and the source of so much hallowed pleasure to the inmates of the Rauhe Haus.

"Labour has a gold bottom," says an old well-known



The Green Fir.

German proverb. Wichern constantly inculcated this on the boys. To keep them mindful of it he gave the name of "The Gold Bottom" (*Der Goldene Boden*) to the fourth house, which was destined for work-shops. That there was urgent need of such an establishment may be gathered from what Wichern said of it in his festival address at the anniversary of this building:—

"I wish, my friends, that all of you could have seen

how matters stood with us in the first winter (1833), and in the spring of 1834. In those days, when there was no other house than the old one, the boys had to act all parts, and do everything. They were, each in his turn, chambermaids and charwomen: they sewed, mended, and darned; they were cooks and washerwomen. These kinds of work done, they walked out to the garden and



The Gold Bottom.

the field. But what were we to do when wind and snow unmercifully drove us out of the garden? Early in the morning, and late in the evening, the boys contentedly put up with the school, but during the day they wanted some work for their hands. But what? And where? And how? We should have been at our wits' ends had not our garden *grown* a relief. Near the pond, over where the silver-white birches are, a large Canadian

poplar, with an air of self-complacency and arrogance, lifted up its tall form to the sky. Who could love that tree? It was such a fluttering, silly fellow, giving no shade whatever, and looking like a living fright and an embodied weakness. But its wood might be turned to profit, and so we resolved to cut it down. What a hurrah! Axe and spade in hand, all pounced upon him; and though some strokes came down rather left-handedly, yet at length the old fellow had to bend, and his high top to kiss the ground. And now destruction came down upon him in its full weight. Saws ran through his body, and axes cut off his members. Soon he was divided into large blocks. Now secret thoughts as to what was to be done with him were revealed. We had become aware that shoes and boots are expensive articles, and we thought wooden slippers or clogs would better answer the purpose. That was why we wanted to have that old fellow's flesh and bones. We borrowed a chopping-bench and a large knife from a neighbour, and our dear W—— was the first who tried to fabricate a wooden slipper by means of these rusty instruments. He made but a poor thing of it at first, but at last he succeeded wonderfully well, and all of us cried, 'Well done, W——!' Now the other boys were put to work, and soon we stood in slippers like kings. Then other wants suggested other labours. Our friends E—— and G—— applied themselves to making matches; others cut spoons, which we thought would be a great saving, but it proved scarcely worth the trouble. Still all this gave scope for exercise, and we went on in this way, trying what our hands could do, till we succeeded better and better. It is true our

workshop at that time was only a miserable barn, the walls of which threatened to collapse; and it was so wretchedly narrow, that every one stood in the way of his neighbour. Still there was a good germ in that ugly-looking hut, and it sprouted up beautifully in the spring of 1834."

The speaker then related how one trade after another



The Bookbinding Office.

grew; how some boys gradually took to joinery, and others to tailoring, and others to baking the bread for the house, &c.; and how at length necessity compelled the building of the Gold Bottom, which was finished in 1836. It is an oblong building, twenty-four feet by eighty, and of two stories. The upper one contains a garret, a dwelling for twelve boys, and a dwelling for half a dozen of Brethren, who, while assisting in training the boys, are

themselves trained as agents of the Inner Mission. The ground-floor contains three tailors' shops, two shoemakers' shops, a slipper-maker's shop, a wool-spinning shop for boys, and a joiner's shop with benches.*

The thrashing-floor of the Green Fir soon became too strait for the increasing number of attendants. Between seventy and eighty people came, every morning and

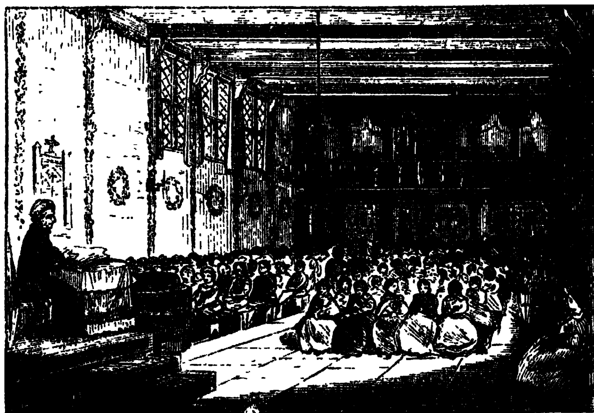


The Chapel.

evening, to family worship. A prayer-house was urgently wanted; but where was the money to come from? Happily one day intelligence arrived that some friends

* The printing office is on the ground-floor of the Swiss House. A special house is built for the bookbinding. The labour of the boys consists also in painting, building, and agricultural work. The girls are trained as servants, washer-women, cooks, and seamstresses. The printing and bookbinding offices take orders from the public, but as the Rauhe Haus has its own very extensive publishing business, the greater portion of this work is done for itself. All the other work is for the institution.

in America had sent a considerable sum. This was the signal for the commencement of the eagerly desired work, and on the 7th of October 1839 the little Chapel—for such it may be called—with its pretty little spire and belfry, rose at a few yards from the Gold Bottom, so that the *ora* was placed in sight of the *labora*. The inside forms a square room, eighteen feet high, provided with a



Interior of the Chapel.

gallery opposite the pulpit, and capable of containing three hundred people. All the year round it is adorned with green wreaths, festoons, and garlands, symbolic of the continued freshness of the everlasting life which should always live in our hearts. The forms in the middle of the chapel are occupied by the children, the girls sitting on the right hand side, and the boys on the left. Round about are the places for the adult inmates

of the establishment. The organ is placed in the gallery, and peeps picturesquely through one of the seven semicircular festoons which stretch from the left wall to the right. The corners of the balustrade are adorned with the two well-known orphans' images of Rauch. Under the one which holds a plate in its hand, is the inscription, "Blessed are the merciful." The other represents a praying boy, and bears the inscription, "Pray, and it shall be given unto you." Between them an angel strikes a harp, with the inscription, "Sing and play unto the Lord." The balustrade is formed by twelve carved images, representing the Apostles. The desk, on which lies a splendidly-bound Bible, bears the inscription, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

III.

The Beehive—The Swallows' Nests—The Fishers' Cottage—The Vine-Hill.

MEANWHILE the upper story of the Swiss House had become crowded. It lodged two families, each of twelve boys. This was an anomaly opposed to the fundamental principle of the establishment. Want of money, however, had hitherto prevented the building of a new house. But the thought occurred to Wichern that the difficulty might be met by the boys themselves. There were forty-three of them, varying in age from ten to twenty-two years. They had rendered practical assist-

ance in the building of four houses. Why could they not build the fifth one with their own hands? The experiment ought to be made, and how glorious would it be if it succeeded! It would be a cheap house, and a monument of the power of good training at the same time.

One summer afternoon Wichern was sitting with two friends in an arbour. Their conversation, as usual, turned upon the Rauhe Haus, and Wichern mentioned the thought that had occurred to him.

"And how much do you think such a home-built house would cost you?" one of the friends asked.

"Why," Wichern answered, little dreaming of the intention with which the question was put, "I think it will come to something like 500 marks" (£30).

"Very well, I will give you that; but mind, the house must be built by the boys themselves, and by nobody else."

"Of course, of course," Wichern exclaimed, joyfully pressing his friend's hand.

He hurried home happy as a king. But alas! when quietly sitting down with the master-joiner to calculate, he found that he had underrated the cost by £18. And, what was worse still, his benevolent friend, on hearing that the house could not be built for the £30, might perhaps reckon himself free from his promise. Happily this was not the case. "Try to obtain the deficit," he said; "I shall keep faithful to my 500 marks." Now Wichern began to hesitate as to whether he should commence to build or not. He resolved at length to delay till the deficit should be obtained.

"Do not plant vegetables at yonder spot in the garden as yet," he said to the farmer of the establishment; "perhaps God will send us the money in time, and then we shall want the ground for the house."

Days and weeks elapsed, but no money came in. At length the farmer one morning knocked at the door of Wichern's study. Senator Fritze, of Bremen, was then closeted with him.

"What about that piece of ground in the garden?" the farmer asked; "It is full time now to plant the vegetables."

"Well, I think you may as well take it," Wichern said; "for I do not believe our hopes will be realized this year."

Off went the farmer, and soon he was engaged with the boys turning up the ground.

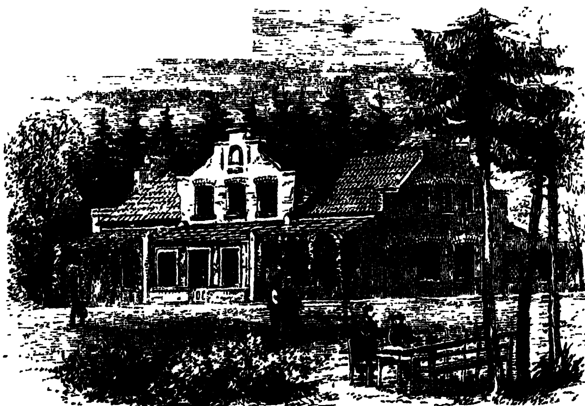
"Without wishing to be intrusive," Senator Fritze said, "may I ask you what those hopes of yours are which you don't believe will be realized?"

Wichern told his story. The senator humbly requested to be permitted to make up the deficit. In a joyful voice Wichern called a servant.

"Tell the farmer not to plant the cabbage, as we shall have to put up a house: we have got the money."

The farmer and the boys could scarcely believe their ears when the servant brought them these tidings. They burst out into a hurrah. The whole establishment got into a merry stir when it was known that all hands would be called out next day for the building of the house. And how the boys did put their shoulders to the wheel! The house sprang up as if by the stroke of a magic wand.

On the 3d of October, 1841, "The Beehive" was solemnly opened. It was so named because the twelve boys who entered it were compared to a swarm of bees, flying from one hive (the Swiss House) into another. It is pretty, strongly-built, and contains six spacious rooms. It is adorned by a beautiful verandah, a present from two ladies, who, after having inspected the house and learnt



The Beehive.

its story, were pleased to give the boys this permanent token of their esteem and satisfaction.

The next year, 19th October 1842, we find Wichern at a meeting of his committee in the midst of the *debris* of Hamburg, which had just been burned down. The Rauhe Haus had not been behind in coming to the rescue: it had proved a place of refuge to many a helpless family, driven out of its home by the raging flames.

The fearful disaster had greatly increased the number of destitute children. Urgent applications came in on behalf of at least twenty-four; but there was not room for one. A new house ought to be built; but could this be thought of in present circumstances? There was not a farthing left in the Rauhe Haus box, and it was doubtful whether for a year or two to come one farthing would be received, so much being required to replace the damage of the fire. Still the cries of the homeless and helpless children were too loud for any objections. The committee resolved to feel the pulse of the public liberality at this critical moment. An advertisement was put in the papers asking £150 for the building of a house for twenty-four children, at a time when nearly the whole of Hamburg required to be rebuilt! It seemed an injudicious if not an absurd appeal. The advertisement was published on the 21st, and by the 27th £155 were sent in! It was a touching repetition of the beautiful old story of Exod. xxxvi. 6: "The people brought much more than enough for the service of the work." Another advertisement was issued to stop the pouring in of the gifts; but before this had fully taken effect the treasurer had £200 in hand.

Another festival period now came on for the Rauhhausler. No sooner had the breath of spring freed the frozen fields from their winter-fetters than the boys rushed to the work, and on the 23d of June 1843 a large double house, capable of containing two families, stood as a new monument of the power of Christian faith and love. These two dwellings, being on their rear as it were attached to the Chapel, and facing the rising sun, obtained the name

of "The Swallows' Nests" (*Die Schwalbennester*). They were destined for two families of girls. So the girls who crowded the Ruge Hoos removed to their new abode, and the old house was at once peopled with a fresh supply of boys. The two houses have separate entrances and the interior construction is so arranged that each family lives entirely apart from the other. The dwelling



The Swallows' Nests

room and kitchen are on the ground floor, the upper storey contains two bedrooms, a room for the two superintending Sisters and a sick room.

Meanwhile the boys, who, after the removal of their friends to the Beehive, were left behind on the first floor of the Swiss House, began to feel rather solitary and uncomfortable. They could never look at the Beehive without feeling tempted to transgress the tenth Com

mandment, and frequent petitions came to Wichern begging permission to build a house for themselves. Indeed there was much that made their present abode undesirable. Moreover, the printing office, which was on the ground-floor, required more room, and apartments for the infirmary were wanted. All this was perfectly true; but it was equally true that there was no money. So the petitions were put aside for the time, and the boys had to console themselves with the hope of better days.

Now it happened, one fine autumn day of 1844, that a lady, a friend of the Rauhhausler, visited the establishment, in the company of her parents. On inspecting the Beehive they were quite astonished at the small sum which the building of that house had cost; and the father of the lady could not help confessing that the Hamburg builders might well come here to take a lesson; for though he did not exactly recollect how much his house at Hamburg had cost him, yet he thought he was safe in saying that it had amounted to many Prussian thalers more.

"I think it has," the young lady said, with a smile; "and if you should like to see, papa, how the boys here manage to do it at such a cheap rate, I suppose they will gladly show you, if you will give the money."

"Undoubtedly," said Wichern. "The boys over there at the Swiss House are quite ready for it."

The next day the Hamburg post brought a letter from the wealthy merchant, with £75 for the building of a new house. The Swiss House resounded with the applause of the boys. The winter, which now seemed to

them to creep like a snail, was allowed to pass; but the first vernal sun put the whole Rauhe Haus population astir. On the 12th of October, 1845, the new house was opened. The boys who entered it were looked upon as little fishes caught in the net of the Gospel, and the house was accordingly called the "The Fishers' Cottage" (*Die Fischerhütte*). Meanwhile two other houses were



The Fishers' Cottage.

built, viz., a wash-house and a house for agricultural purposes, the expense of which was met by a legacy, and by contributions of the Brethren, who were being trained here as agents of the Inner Mission. Donations also came in to enable the committee to purchase considerable pieces of land, which, owing to the increase of the population, were indispensable for the support and labour of so many souls. A new house was also built for the far-

mer, in 1851; and a new bake-house was added to the number of buildings.

All this work was done on behalf of the poor and the helpless. For himself, his wife and family, Wichern claimed nothing but the love of those whom he cared for as a father. But the public, which looked at the Rauhe Haus with wonder and gratitude, thought that something more substantial was due to a man who, with such disinterestedness, devoted his life and talents to the welfare of his fellow-beings. Some friends put their heads together, and raised a fund for building an excellent house on a free piece of ground, close to the establishment, and surrounded by a beautiful garden, which opens into one of the main paths of the Rauhe Haus park. It is a beautiful country-house of two stories, each with six windows in front, built in an elegant style, and adorned with a picturesque verandah. It was given to Wichern as his own property, without reference to the establishment. To this building he removed in 1851, and the house which he left was given to the Rev. Mr Riehm, who was engaged as "Inspector" of the Establishment, under Wichern's superintendence. The appointment of such an official was urgently required to relieve Wichern of some of his arduous labours, which had increased very much, especially since he became an authority in the work of the Inner Mission, and was often called away from home to preside over meetings, and to serve the Prussian Government with his valuable advice in matters of prison and poor-reform. The Establishment has since been under the able control of Mr. Riehm, who with his family continues to live in Wichern's former

house, which forms one building with the chapel, and it is owing to that faithful Christian brother's services that Wichern could some years ago accept a call as *Ober consistorial-rath* of the Prussian church, in which capacity he acts at the same time as a president of the Government office for the superintendence of the moral and religious concerns of prisons, and of institutions for the



Dr Wichern's House

poor This high and important position compels him to spend the winter in Berlin, where the great Establishment for training Christian young men as agents of the Inner Mission, called the Evangelical Johannesstiftung, which was founded under his direction, enjoys the benefit of his valuable superintendence. His summer-months, however, are spent at the Rauhe Haus, where, in the midst of the children, whom he continues to love as a father, he

enjoys that healthful relaxation which is so necessary after a long winter spent in the cares of Church and State.

The Fishers' Cottage was not long built before hard times came upon the Establishment. The years 1852–54 were years of dearth. The prices of provisions and other necessaries of life rose so high that the Rauhe Haus could not possibly continue unless assisted by help from



The Vine-Hill.

without. For the second time an appeal to the liberality of the public was made by advertisement, and not in vain. Gifts to the amount of £1200 poured in, in 1853; and some well-wishers raised, of their own accord, an additional sum of £480, in 1854. Meanwhile, a plan which had long been discussed was carried into practise, viz., that of building a School or Gymnasium for boys of the richer class. This *pensionnat*, which is called "The Vine-

Hill" (*Der Weinberg*), is the largest building of the place. It measures 175 feet in length; consists of three two-storied houses; and has cost the Establishment £1800. It contains spacious school-rooms and first-rate accommodation for about twelve or fourteen boys, who pay for their board, lodging, and instruction. Besides the usual branches of school-science, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew are taught here. Young Candidats, who, under the title of Upper Assistants (*Oberhelfer*), are engaged as teachers at this school, and at the same time as teachers of the Brethren, find here ample opportunity for exercising themselves in the duties of the pastoral work, for which they are destined. The rest of the premises is devoted to the publishing office and the infirmary.

IV.

The Schonburg—The Song-Feast—The Labour Feast—The Organization of the Families

THE last house that was built is the pretty family-house, "The Schönburg," called after the Prince of *Schönburg-Waldenburg*, who gave £240 for its construction. It was put up by the boys, and solemnly opened on the 12th July 1854.

On the afternoon of that day more than a thousand eople, young and old, rich and poor, learned and un- ed, councillors and clergymen, came flocking to-

gether from Hamburg and the neighbouring places, and assembled in the gardens of the Rauhe Haus. The Chapel, of course, could not contain one-third of them, so, after prayer was offered up in it, and the 103d Psalm read, the whole assembly proceeded to the new house, which stood in the midst of young firs and fragrant apple and nut-trees, and was adorned with wreaths and flowers.



The Schonburg

Dr Wichern, standing on the play-ground of the house, first addressed the children, and pointed them to Christ, who was *the* founder of the building. Two family-Bibles were then produced, one for the boys' family which was to dwell in it, and one for the Brethren who were to live with them. The name of "Schonburg" was then solemnly given to the house, in grateful commemoration of the princely donor. Thereupon the minister of Horn led

the way inside, with the family-Bible under his arm, while twelve of the ladies present followed, each leading a boy by the hand. Meanwhile the whole of the other inmates of the place sang a hymn in chorus. After that the twelve boys assembled round the family-table, and through the open windows their friends outside could hear the earnest prayer with which the minister implored God's blessing upon the house and its inhabitants.

There was afterwards a labour-festival in honour of the various trades taught and practised at the Establishment, and a song-festival, in honour of the art of singing, succeeded.

The same spirit that characterizes the feasts pervades the life of each family. Earnestness and cheerfulness, strict order and liberty, go hand-in-hand. The *Friedensknabe*, or "Boy of Peace," who is elected by the unanimous consent of all the members of the family, is their leader, arbiter, and counsellor in the emergencies of their daily life. Over him stands a Brother, a young man, who is the house-father. He is one of a band of six or seven young men who live with the family under the same roof; he shares their meals and sports, and trains them for an orderly life in the spirit of the Gospel. A Candidat of theology also lives with them, under the title of *Oberhelfer*, or "upper-assistant." He forms the link between the family and Wichern. Thus the whole organisation assumes a pyramidal form; and through the medium of all its intervening links Wichern can exercise the strictest control over each child, and send down his impulse to the most distant member. While there is the greatest diversity—each family living apart, having its own house

and garden, its own habits and manners, its own history and character—unity is at the same time preserved, lest it should be forgotten that each household is a member of one large family, of which Wichern is the head. It is astonishing how such a system of supervision could be contrived as puts every child day and night under the direct control of an adult person, and yet has nothing about it of the surveillance of the prison, and very little even of the strict discipline of the boarding-school. When reading Stevenson's account of the "somewhat complex machinery" of the Rauhe Haus' family life, with its order of the day marked out from hour to hour—with its weekly meetings, its fortnightly conferences, its journals and records kept by the Brothers, its divisions of labour, and its various rules for regulating each child's business at home, from the cleaning of the bedrooms to the carrying of the Bible to the Chapel—I could not but wonder how this complicated clock-work kept going smoothly. The secret lies in the thorough *family* feeling with which each household is inspired. The Brothers who superintend and teach the children live with them, not as officers live with their soldiers in the barracks, nor even as teachers and governors live with their pupils at the boarding-school, but really as elder brothers, as members of one family; and when at work with them they do not stand by in the attitude of overseers or instructors, but join as fellow-labourers, who have one common task in hand. This family feeling would be impossible were not everything carefully avoided that could suggest artificial association—such as all the members being of the same trade or of the same age. Nature is followed as much as pos-

sible in the constitution of a family. All trades, all ages, and all characters are represented in each. When a child comes to the establishment it is not registered with a family until after it has been duly tried and examined at the novitiate-house, where it is kept till its nature and character are ascertained. The elder children have always some younger ones about them who need their help and indulgence. The younger children, on the other hand, always see some elder ones near them, whom they have to thank for kindness, or to rely upon for direction. This engenders a feeling of cordial attachment. Each household is characterized by a family spirit peculiar to itself; and this causes a commendable ambition to keep up the family honour and reputation. Nothing is more dreaded by a family than to see one of its members censured for laziness or bad conduct in the weekly report, which is read in the presence of all the inmates of the establishment. So every one of the twelve is taught to feel an interest in maintaining the rules and regulations of his family, however multifarious these may be, and however cumbrous they may seem to those who stand outside. Such a thing as clannishness, however, is kept out with might and main, sufficient provision being made for the mingling of the families as one community. At school the children are classed according to their ages and capacities; in the fields and the workshops according to their trades. The family union there completely disappears; but no sooner does the bell ring for meals than it is formed again, each one, arranged in military file, marching to its own house, to enjoy for an hour the benefits and comforts of a happy home.

The Brethren of the Rauhe Haus—Their Division into small Families called Convicts—The Candidats of Theology.

THE great idea that filled Wichern's mind was the forming of a link between philanthropic Christian labour and the labourers—the establishing of a place where the labourers could be gathered from all quarters in order to be taught what they were in need of learning, where they could be found when wanted, and from whence they could disperse into the various fields of labour which would be thus opened up to their exertions. This idea gave birth to the society called "The Brethren of the Rauhe Haus." Young men of the artisan and teacher class were invited to live with the children for two or three years and to become their friends, their leaders and teachers. Before their admission they required to know some trade, which they could teach the children. In each family house accommodation was made for six or seven of them. Here, while they were teaching, they were to be learning how to deal with the ignorant, the neglected, and the lost, in order to rescue them from ruin, and to bring them back to Christ. They were to be supported independently of the children's establishment. Their board and lodging was to be paid to the establishment; not out of their own pockets, of course, for the pockets of most of them were empty. Subscriptions and donations were solicited for the support of the Brethren's Institution as a separate thing

from the children's establishment. The appeal was not based upon the ground of their being the superintendents and teachers of the children, but on the ground of their being in the course of training for the work of the Inner Mission at large. It was a society not merely for the benefit of the Rauhe Haus, but of the whole of Protestant Germany. Governments were informed of the matter, and gladly allowed grants for the training of gaol officers and schoolmasters. Voluntary gifts also poured in from all quarters. It was evident that the establishing of this society was the timely and long-looked for answer to the urgent prayer of many Christian philanthropists.

To know what kind of people these Brothers are, it may be well to hear what they have to say about themselves:—"We, the Brothers here assembled,"—thus they speak in a paper which they issued—"come from all parts of our beloved fatherland. Our homes are in Prussia from the Memel to the Rhine, in Baden, Bavaria, Hesse, Würtemberg, Thuringia, Hanover, Mecklenburg, Holstein, Schleswig. There is not one of us who was not in a position to earn his daily bread. Want has brought none of us here. When, in distant lands, we heard of the work which the Lord had begun and is carrying on in this house, we prayed that we might be sharers of the blessing and of the work amongst the children. Our house-father called us here to be helpers in the work, and not one of us has obeyed this call without the blessing of his parents. We bring neither money nor property; and if there were some of us able and anxious to give of their substance, they were prevented by a riper wisdom than their own. What we have we

freely give, namely, ourselves, as a thank-offering to God for the good of the community. We are here, with our house-father and the entire Rauhe Haus, in one faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We are nothing but unprofitable servants. Christ is our righteousness; His word alone is a lamp to our feet. In this faith and spirit we are one, and have one love towards each other, as brothers in faith and in the work to which we are called."

This is plain language, and, what is more, it is sincere. There is always a little more sentiment in a German than in an English society; but the sentiment of the Rauhe Haus Brothers does not savour of weakness. Those of them, at least, whom I met appeared to me to be manly, stalwart, and straightforward.

They occupy the first stories of the houses, while the children live on the ground-floor. Though mingling with the children all the day in the school, the workshop, and the field, yet they form separate families by themselves. To distinguish a Brothers' family from a children's family, the former is unfortunately called by the monkish name of *convict.** Injudiciously chosen as the name may be, still the thing which it denotes is all right. There is nothing of a monk in a Rauhe Haus brother, nor is there anything resembling a cloister in their *convicts*. It is true they are not permitted to marry as long as they are in the establishment; but the reasonableness of this needs no defence.

Each *convict* bears its own name. As the names of the children's families are taken from the form or the

* From the Latin *convivo*, to live together.

history of the houses in which they live, so the names of the *convicts* are taken from noted places in Palestine. Thus the *convict Cana* lives with the family of the old Ruge Hoos; the *convict Bethel* lives at the Beehive; and so on with the other *convicts Bethlehem. Nazareth, Emmaus, Nain*, and *Tabor*. They have their own household, which is regulated by the same rules as regulate the household of the families. One of the Brethren is appointed director of the *convict*, and another house-father of the children's family. The latter does not live with the *convict*, but with the family downstairs, which he never leaves, either by day or by night. He eats and drinks, works and plays with them, and sleeps with them in the same bedroom. The other members of the *convict*, however, are not excluded from the family; they regularly assist the house-father in its management. The chief part of their labour for the good of the family, however, consists in visiting the parents of the children, most of whom live at Hamburg. Every Sunday they go to town, two together, to tell the parents all about the children; and while finding a way to their hearts through a confidential chat about Hans or William, whom they know, the Brethren at the same time find an opportunity of speaking a word about Christ, whom they do not know. Then, having returned from their mission, they again find an open door to the hearts of the children, who are anxious to learn what father did and what mother said, and whether the dog is still with them. But on the first Sunday of every month, the Brethren do not go to town, for then the parents come to the establishment, being permitted to visit the children.

Of the part which the Brethren take in teaching the children their trades I have spoken already. As the *convicts* consist of the representatives of various trades, it is obvious that their division into *convicts* cannot be observed when they are labouring with the children. Thus the members of the different *convicts* meet every day at the fields and shops. Besides, there is a weekly conference of all the Brethren, presided over by the Inspector, at which the concerns of the families are discussed, and interesting topics regarding education and teaching conversed upon. And every fortnight Wichern unites the *convicts* at a brotherly meeting, for confirming and strengthening their mutual fellowship and intercourse.

With each *convict* lives a Candidat of theology, as an Upper-Assistant. He stays at least one, and if possible two, years with the Brethren. He is their teacher in such branches of education as they must know in order to be fit for their future situations, as for instance—Biblical History, Universal History, Geography, Natural Philosophy, etc. To this instruction twenty-five hours are devoted every week. Besides, he controls the school-teaching of the children. He receives a small stipend to provide his clothing. His chief remuneration, however, is the immense amount of practical knowledge which he obtains in pastoral and home mission labour. A clergyman, who as a Candidat has spent a couple of years at the Rauhe Haus, knows how to superintend a popular school, how to deal with the poor, how to help the wretched and miserable, and, above all, how to do these things not as a police-officer, but as a servant of Him, who is a Saviour not of the body only, but of the soul. Many

of these Candidats also become directors of Charities, or chaplains of prisons. Out of the sixty-five who had lived with the *convicts* from the commencement of the Society till 1861, twenty-eight entered upon situations of that kind.

VI

The Work of the Brethren outside the Rauhe Haus. Their Union into a Brotherhood.

WICHERN is not too rash in admitting a young man as a Brother, since out of 846 who applied during a period of twenty-five years (from 1836–61), 524 were refused. Nor has he any difficulty in finding situations for them after the expiration of their service at the Establishment. During the above-mentioned period not less than 787 applications came in for Brethren. Two hundred and fifty-two were wanted as house-fathers or assistants in reformatories, 59 in workhouses, 57 as visitors of the poor, 93 as teachers in popular schools, 40 as house-fathers in orphanages, 170 for prisons, 36 for hospitals, and 80 for various philanthropic purposes. These applications came from all parts of the globe; most, of course, from Germany, but many also from Holland, France, England, Switzerland, Italy, Russia, Poland, the Danubian Principalities, Turkey, America, and the Southern Asiatic Archipelago. To supply all these demands was out of the question; only the more important and urgent ones

could be attended to, as the number of Brethren only amounted to 255, of whom 43 were required for the service of the Establishment. Of the remaining 212, 42 became house-fathers, and 19 assistants in reformatories or orphanages; 30 were employed as teachers in schools, 68 in prisons, 4 in establishments for released prisoners, 4 in workhouses; 3 became house-fathers in philanthropic eating-houses; 10 in hospitals and family sick-rooms, 1 in a Magdalen asylum; 8 were engaged as preachers among the emigrants in America (2 of these house-fathers in schools), and 9 in sundry philanthropic purposes. Geographically they were divided as follows:—124 in Prussia, 10 in Hamburg, 11 in Bremen, 10 in Saxony, 9 in the United States, 8 in Mecklenburg, 6 in Hanover, 5 in the Baltic provinces of Russia, 4 in London, 4 in Syria, 12 in Wurtemberg, Bavaria, Holstein, and Lübeck, 1 in Altenburg, 1 in Hesse-Cassel, 1 in Nassau, 1 in Switzerland, 1 in France, 1 in Italy, 1 in Serbia, and 1 in Turkey.

These figures are quickly written, and they are read more quickly still, but each of them tells a long and interesting story, which even angels must listen to with wonder and pleasure. They tell us that every day these Rauhe Haus Brethren instruct and train more than 3000 children, most of whom, but for their self-denying and devout zeal, would grow up for the prison and the scaffold; they lead us into the cells of gaols, many of which, before they were visited by these Brethren, were horrible dungeons, scarcely habitable by human beings, but are now turned into clean, well-ventilated, wholesome places, where the cursing and swearing of inhuman turnkeys are no more heard, but the voice of compassion

whispers the blessed name of Jesus, and prays the prisoners, in Christ's stead, "Be ye reconciled to God." If the Acts of the Apostles could be continued up to our time as a record of the labours of the Holy Spirit in a lost world, the history, travels, and works of these Brethren would be sure to fill many a page. And it would certainly not fail to strike the reader of those pages as remarkable, that this noble band of good men proceeded from that town which, in point of morality and religious life, is one of the worst in Germany.

One of the most striking proofs of the courageous devotedness of the Brethren to the cause of humanity and Christian charity was given when the typhus fever, after a terrible famine, raged in Silesia in 1848. There were thirty Brethren in the house at that time. When the cry for help arose, all of them, and two of the Candidats, offered their services. A selection must be made. With ten of them Wichern hastened to the abode of the plague. Favoured by the Government, and strongly countenanced by the noble Prince Von Pless, a wealthy landed proprietor of the district, they addressed themselves to their dangerous and almost superhuman task. At one place they found more than one hundred dead bodies unburied. They lived for months as it were in tombs, uncertain whether the graves which were being dug were not destined for themselves. The hand of the Lord of life and death evidently protected them while they were fighting the pest at the sick-beds, and carrying its victims to the cemetery. And when, after a loss of thousands of lives, the plague at length subsided, other thousands of poor helpless orphans swarmed round about,

crying for shelter and bread. Several Protestant orphanages were established in this Popish district. Two of them (one was a gift of the Prince) were committed to the care and direction of the Brethren, and are under their care and management still. In the Danish-German war of 1864 their intrepid charity was again severely tested. Of the 37 Brethren who were in the house, 26 begged to be permitted to hasten to the field of battle to nurse the wounded and comfort the weary. Only 12 of them could, however, be permitted to go.

It is not surprising that a feeling of cordial attachment and fraternal fellowship should exist between young men animated by the same principles, serving the same Master, sharing the same dangers, and enduring the same trials. And it is not surprising that steps should be taken by them to keep up mutual intercourse, even when they are separated by land and sea. So the Brethren, whatever be the variety of their characters and spheres of labour, continue one in Christ, praying for each other, keeping up correspondence, and promoting each other's interests and prosperity. Wherever they may be, whether in Constantinople or in America, they read every morning the same portion of Scripture; select the same text as a motto for the day, the week, and the year; sing the same hymns; and pray for one another at the same hour. They despatch their letters to the Rauhe Haus at regular times. These are read at the conferences, and answered accordingly. In all this there is not only nothing objectionable, but, on the contrary, it is praiseworthy and lovely, provided it be entirely a matter of free and mutual agreement, compliance with which is

perfectly optional. But Dr. Wichern, with the concurrence of his committee, has deemed it necessary to carry their union a step further, and to consolidate it into a regular Brotherhood. He has not allowed the fraternal bond to take its own free course, but has taken its organization into his own hands, and moulded it into such a form that, viewed from a distance at least, it resembles a monastic order.

But there is much in the Brotherhood which makes it impossible for any one to mistake it for a monastic order. First, the Brethren are not bound by a vow, every one of them being at liberty to leave at any moment. Then, those who live outside the Rauhe Haus are permitted to marry, if in a position to support a wife and family. They are also free as to the choice of their dress, as they wear no uniform. These three things are certainly of great importance, and, if faithfully adhered to, will keep up a constant distinction between a Brother and a monk. On the other hand, there are things which, if that distinction should disappear, would prove a fit preparation for a system of Protestant monachism. Dr. Wichern and his Committee exact from the Brethren such abject submission as even an abbot would scarcely require from his monks. They are not only the leading men of the Brotherhood, but they are also its autocratic directors. A young man who enters the House as a Brother, learns from the regulations for admission that he is not to consider the House as a school of training for some future optional occupation in the sphere of missions, but as the centre of a great work, into the service of which he is taken from the

moment he puts his foot on the threshold. There are young men who stay for one or two years in the House merely to learn missionary duties, and then leave it to choose their own field of labour; but such young men are only *guests*—they are not members of the Brotherhood. A Brother is a person who is supposed to have resigned his own will as to choosing his field of labour. Dr. Wichern and his Committee choose for him. They may send him out as a schoolmaster, or as a prison officer, or as a hospital nurse. They may send him to the banks of the Vistula, of the Tiber, or of the Mississippi. But in whatever capacity, or to whatever quarter of the globe they may send him, *he* has no voice in the matter. When sent out, he is, as it were, hired out by Dr. Wichern to the party who is to employ him, and all contracts and future arrangements are settled between that party and the Doctor. During the time of his service, he is, of course, entirely under the direction and control of those who employ him. Neither Dr. Wichern nor his Committee claim any right whatever of interfering with his work. But he is not at liberty to give up his situation without the permission of the Committee; to whom also his employers must give notice if they desire to dismiss him. When he returns to the Rauhe Haus, he is certain to find shelter and support till he is sent out again. It stands to reason that this connexion with Dr. Wichern and his Committee must be desirable to many a young man. Not only is he sure of constant employment in some sphere of Christian labour, but also of assistance in case of sickness, and of support for his widow and orphans in case of death. His character

stands fixed before the public. He need not trouble himself about obtaining introductions or recommendations. But if any one of the Brethren refuses to obey the Committee, all official connexion between him and them is cut off; and, though they may continue to keep up friendly intercourse with him, yet the fact of his being separated from the Brotherhood must have an unfavourable bearing upon the progress of his future single-handed enterprises. This absolute dependence of the Brethren upon Dr. Wichern and his Committee is the basis upon which the Brotherhood, as a society, rests.

Each Brother carries with him a document, with the seal and signatures of the Committee, certifying that he is a member of the Brotherhood, and mentioning in what capacity he is sent out. This is to prevent impostors from applying for engagements under the pretext of being one of the Rauhe Haus band. A strong feeling in regard to the honour of the Brotherhood is kept up by all its members. They have the right of excluding from their number every member whose conduct casts a slur upon the body; but such is their *esprit de corps*, that during the whole period of the existence of the fraternity only one or two instances of this exercise of discipline have occurred.

Now it cannot be denied that such a society may be very useful to both the Church and the State. It must be a convenient thing for both that there is a man in the world who has at his disposal a band of from 250 to 300 able, well-trained, and well-principled young men whom he can send where he chooses. If the State wants a schoolmaster, a jail officer, or a sick-nurse; if the Church

wants a colporteur, a catechist, or a director of an asylum, they know where to apply. It also stands to reason that absolute submission, on the part of the Brethren, is indispensable for the right working of the system. Were it left to them to choose their own field of labour, the proportionate distribution of work would be impossible; many a prison, perhaps, would be without an able jailor, and many a young schoolmaster would be without a school. Viewed in the light of expediency, therefore, Wichern's scheme is worthy of admiration. It really is a wonderful thing that a man should have succeeded in forming a band of young Christians, who, of their own free accord, allow themselves to be disposed of like machines. In England we have no conception of this kind of dominion over the mind. Here there is many a man who has power over a thousand individuals; but the relation between them is one of pounds, shillings, and pence. They are his servants, and he pays them their wages. But of a *Brotherhood*—of a society of free Christian men, who rejoice in being kings and priests to God, and at the same time submit themselves to a man, who disposes of them as if they were his servants, who fixes their work and place of abode according to his opinion, and may turn them to the left or to the right as he thinks proper—of such a society we have no conception. The Brethren of the Rauhe Haus may assure us that they feel as free and happy as kings—that they rejoice in that man's wise directions—that they never felt greater peace than since they entered that Brotherhood;—all we can answer is. We believe it, but we do not understand it. Viewed in the light of expediency,

Dr. Wichern's scheme is quite clear; but viewed in the light of Christian liberty, it is a perfect mystery, and its realisation is a miracle.

VII.

The Inner Mission and its relation to the Rauhe Haus Brotherhood

BUT the Rauhe Haus Brotherhood has a connexion with, and in fact is only part and parcel of, another and much wider scheme of Wichern's. His great work is the *Innere Mission*, of which he is the representative leader, if not the originator. This Inner Mission is indigenous to Germany. It is not exactly what we call a Home Mission: it comprehends the Home Missions, as the government of a country may be said to comprehend the municipalities of the towns; but it differs from them as to the extent of the field of its operations and as to the form of its organisation. Long before Wichern there were Home Missions in Germany. They were, as they are with us, local missions, got up and carried on by the union of Christian friends in order to encounter, in a certain town or district, through the power of the Gospel, ignorance and infidelity, and their fruits, pauperism and immorality. Now, as long as these evils are limited within the bounds of a certain town or district, Home Missions may be adequate institutions to remedy the evil. But what if the evil extends over a whole country? What if the whole Church of a country is pervaded with

a spirit of infidelity and worldly-mindedness—if whole communities and districts have sunk into a state of heathenism—if hosts of homeless and godless paupers and vagabonds wander through the land in its length and breadth, threatening ruin to Church and State? Such was the state of things in Germany at the time when Wichern founded the Rauhe Haus, and such is the state of things there even still to a large extent. In England, where the nation is ruled by only one Government and united by only one religion, viz., the Protestant —where prosperity blesses all classes of society, and order is maintained everywhere—such a state of things is comparatively unknown, except in the larger towns The same may to a great degree be said of France. But in Germany, whose sixty millions of people are ruled by from thirty to forty Governments—where Popery and Protestantism are so nearly matched in numbers that they are induced to unite in a latitudinarian compromise at the expense of faith and principle—where whole districts and countries are scarcely able to provide their inhabitants with the necessaries of life—where, consequently, a propensity towards wandering about and emigrating, strengthened by an innate love for the adventurous, often drives crowds of people from one end of the world to the other—in Germany, I say, infidelity, pauperism, and immorality exist on a large scale. There Home Missions came far short of meeting the evil: they were but drops in the ocean. An institution was required of such dimensions as to cover Germany with a network of missionary stations, each supplied with means sufficient to follow the stray sheep even into their most obscure

hiding-places, and to provide them with places of refuge, of correction, of repentance, and of conversion to the only good Shepherd.

Such an institution the Church might have been; but the very fact that the evil had grown up not only in the sight but in the bosom of the Church, was sufficient evidence of her impotence to deal with the matter. The great bulk of the paupers and vagabonds, of the prostitutes and thieves, were members, or at least children of members, of the Church. There was no town, village, or hamlet all over Germany, from the Baltic to the Danube, without a church, and there was no church without a clergyman and a staff of office-bearers. Yet the paupers multiplied like vermin, and the vagabonds like caterpillars.

It was in 1849 that Wichern published his able work, *Die Innere Mission der Deutschen Evangelischen Kirche* (The Inner Mission of the German Evangelical Church), and some years later he published that memorable and thrilling pamphlet, *Die Nothstände der Protestantischen Kirche* (The Alarming Condition of the Protestant Church), in which, with the irresistible eloquence of frightful statistics, he laid bare the cancer that was gnawing at the heart of Christianity in Germany, and reducing both Church and State to the brink of hopeless ruin. It could no longer be denied that the Protestant Church had grossly failed in her mission. Many causes had contributed towards this failure; but one of the principal was, doubtless, the spirit of autocratic centralisation, of bureaucratic hierarchism, with which the Governments, and especially the Prussian Government, had ruled the

Church Establishment That Government had kept everything relating to religion in its own hands, permitting no public preaching of the Gospel except by its own clergy, although the number of clergymen was in very great disproportion to the mass of the people to whom they had to minister No wonder that thousands of sheep went astray where four or five thousand had only one pastor to look after them Besides, the clergy, in their character as State officers, were burdened with a heavy load of administrative labours in their parishes and schools, which absorbed a considerable portion of their strength and time But the worst of all was, that while the Government could give to its officers titles, pulpits, and stipends, it could give them neither love to Christ nor sympathy with the lost Many a clergyman had taken orders that he might, as a gentleman, enjoy the company of gentlemen, but not that he might spend an hour in the huts of the poor, or show that the "heart of the wise is in the house of mourning," unless that house of mourning happened to be the burgomaster's, the banker's, or the baron's Wichern was discreet enough not to tell these sad truths in so many words, but every one who read his book could find the facts there It was obvious that the clergy, respectable, and influential, as they were, stood helpless amid the ruin, which they had failed to prevent It was obvious, too, that Gospel labourers ought to be sought for who were humble and self-denying enough to leave title, pulpit, and stipend to the clergy, and zealous enough to do their work among the lower classes. But how were such to be obtained? Two ways were open—either by the foundation of free churches, or by the for-

mation of a band of missionary agents within the Church. Wichern, who was himself a clergyman, adopted the latter plan. The former was not even so much as taken into consideration. He, like all the leaders of Home Missions in Germany, dreaded nothing so much as the rise of a Free Church. To tolerate a religious movement of that character was considered uncongenial to the national spirit, dangerous to the State, injurious to the Church, and offensive to the clergy. Whatever might be the faults of the last-mentioned body, it was deemed wiser to secure their co-operation than to rouse them to resistance. Indeed, there were many excellent Christian preachers and pastors amongst them, who certainly were not to blame that matters had come to such an alarming state, and who looked out for a remedy as seriously and prayerfully as did Wichern himself. At the *Kirchentag*, held in September, 1848, at Wittenberg, under the presidency of Bethmann-Hollweg and Stahl, and attended by five hundred persons, mostly clergymen and University teachers, Wichern's proposal of forming a society for carrying on an Inner Mission throughout Germany met with general approval. He even published an entire plan of organisation, which, like that of the Rauhe Haus, was characteristic of his extraordinary administrative talent, and of his not less extraordinary love for centralisation. The whole gigantic society was mapped out on paper, with its committees in each parish, its boards in each district, its courts in each province, and its central board, which should lead and control the whole organisation. The central board was soon formed, consisting of eleven members. Its president, vice-president, and

secretary were Bethmann-Hollweg, Stahl, and Dr. Von Müller, three distinguished members of the Prussian Government. Another member of the Government, two clergymen, a professor of the University of Wittenberg, a count, a baronet, and Wichern, formed the rest of the committee. Thus the friendship of the three highest powers in Church and State—the Government, the aristocracy, and the clergy—was secured, while Wichern, the popular director of the Rauhe Haus, formed the link between them and the people. The "Fliegende Blätter" were adopted as the organ of the board, through which its proceedings up to the present time have been made known to the public. Agents were appointed, correspondents were chosen, and Home Missionary Societies already in existence were invited to unite their efforts with those of the Inner Mission.

The sphere of labour which this Society has chosen for itself is not within a certain church, nor a certain country, but embraces the whole Christian world. The individuals whom it considers as the special objects of its care are not Jews, Mohammedans, or Heathen, but members of baptized Christendom, especially German Christendom, including German Christians who live out of Germany. The object of the Society is not to found free churches, but to restore straying sheep to their respective folds through the medium of the Gospel. Of course those belonging to the higher and more respectable classes are not overlooked in the endeavours of the Society to bring sinners back to Christ; but as such individuals are not easy of approach, the operations of the Society are mainly directed towards the lower classes.

Viewed in this light, the Society is the result of a tacit compact between the Christian philanthropists and the clergy, by which the latter, while keeping the oversight of the higher and more respectable classes for themselves, hand over the care of the poor, the outcast, and the abandoned to the former. I will not enter nere upon an examination as to how far such a division of labour, by which the pastors are exonerated from the care of their lost sheep, is in harmony with the picture of a good shepherd as given in the Gospel. But this much is certain, that it seems to be a measure which is expedient for the present, since it serves different ends at the same time,—providing the Government with spiritual policemen,* the Church with devout deacons, the philanthropists with useful labour, and the clergy with welcome leisure.

It is only when looked at in connexion with this Inner Mission scheme of Wichern's, that the Rauhe Haus Brotherhood can be properly understood. Its foundation was the solution of the difficult problem, how to form a band of well-trained able Gospel labourers, who, while inspired by free Christian charity, would submit to the various conditions which the Inner Mission, according to Wichern's plan, would impose upon them. These conditions were, to be content with the humble work of evangelisation among the lower classes; to abstain from any attempt to raise or conduct a free religious movement, or to establish an independent mission work of their own; to

* The correctness of this expression may be proved from pp. 33-47 of Wichern's "Inn. Miss.," in which he traces the limits of the Inner Mission within the jurisdiction of the State.

place themselves at the service of the Government, of the clergy, or of whoever should want them, without claiming any other title than that of being the servant of those parties for Christ's sake, or any other privilege than that of being permitted to do the work which other people had neither time nor fancy for. It is obvious that the kind of men who would submit to such restrictions are to be found chiefly among the artisan and peasant class, which is nearest to the lowest, and, respectable though it be, is accustomed to live in the service of others. It is also obvious that the liberty of choosing their own career, and fixing their own field of labour, could not possibly be granted to the Brethren; and that perfect submission to the Committee must be a *conditio sine quâ non* of their admission. And it is also clear that, to make up for their loss of liberty, and to guard them against the spirit of servility which so easily creeps into the souls of men who are kept in constant subordination, they must be united into a Brotherhood, in which, through mutual Christian fellowship and spiritual rivalry, strong enthusiasm would be maintained among them for their work, and high respect for their right of membership in such a body.

Let it be understood, however, that the Rauhe Haus Brotherhood is not a staff of servants of the Inner Mission. They are just a body of Gospel labourers, whom any Christian philanthropist, whether a member of the Inner Mission or not, may take into his service. When he founded the Brotherhood, Wichern only meant it to be the precursor of many similar societies which he hoped other men would form at other places, for the objects of Christian philanthropy at large. Indeed his example was

soon followed by Fliedner, who established the Deacon House at Duisburg, of which a description will be found in a subsequent part of this work. The Duisburg Deacons, however, differ from the Rauhe Haus Brethren, inasmuch as they devote themselves specially to sick-nursing, whereas the others are generally employed in prison and reformatory work. Nor are the Duisburg Brethren formed into an organised Brotherhood, not being trained under the influence of that spirit of centralisation which characterises the originator of the Inner Mission system. Still they are practically in connexion with the Inner Mission. The fact is, that the term Inner Mission is applied to a kind of missionary work which has not yet assumed a regularly organised form, and with which, consequently, everybody who carries on any kind of mission operations may claim connexion. The system of organisation, which Wichern mapped out on paper, has not yet been carried into practice. It is true the Central Board was created long since, but we have not yet heard of the body of which that Board was to be the head; the Parish Committees, the District Boards, the Provincial Courts, etc., do not yet exist. Here and there small parts of the colossal body are seen, but the body as a whole is invisible. If the Governments would step in and take the matter into their hands, the body would soon perhaps appear; but they, it would seem, have not yet found time or courage for such interference. Perhaps Germany may be content with this delay. A spirit without a definite bodily form may, to us creatures of flesh and blood, be a difficult object to grapple with; but it is, at any rate, preferable to a body without a spirit. The Inner Mission, as

it exists at present in Germany, is, no doubt, a great blessing to that country; and it will perhaps be a greater blessing still, if it grow into some regularly organised form by dint of the free development of its own vital power. But if its unity should, through the interference of compulsory power from without, be forced into a visible form, it would soon degenerate into a political institution, which would use the Gospel only as an instrument for state purposes.

VIII

Final Glance at the Rauhe Haus Family Life—The Family Worship and Liturgy—Family Discipline—The Patronage

WE will now take a final glance at the religious life of the Rauhe Haus. We have already pictured the Institution as a well-regulated organisation, with its Children families, Brethren convicts, Candidats, and Teachers; and we have observed that it forms the centre of a numerous Brotherhood scattered all over the world, as well as of a company numbering a thousand individuals, who entered it ignorant, wretched children, and left it orderly members of society. From what we have learnt of the spirit which animates its founder, we must have perceived that nothing is left untried to keep up a union between all those who are, or who may have been, connected with the Society. Nothing is more distasteful to such a mind as Wichern's than dismemberment; nothing more congenial than organisation. And we must give him credit for having found

out a plan of union, which, while keeping the various members of the Rauhe Haus community in spiritual fellowship, savours as little of dead mechanism as is possible in any system of the kind.

The mainspring in this union apparatus is the daily family worship. It assembles all the inmates of the establishment, about two hundred in number, at least once every day, in the Chapel or Prayer-room. They are arranged in progressive order according to the dates of their baptism and communion. The children are seated on five rows of forms or pews facing the House-father, who conducts the service. The form nearest to him is occupied by the latest baptized; the fifth form by those who are about to take their first communion. Behind and on both sides are the places for the communicants. Each row of children is entrusted with a special part of the service, for everything is contrived to give them as great an interest in it as possible without causing confusion. A rich, though perhaps rather complex, liturgy keeps up the attention. This liturgy is interwoven with a series of annual, weekly, and daily texts or sentences, which are regularly repeated. It is made up of three main parts.

The first consists of reading and praying, for which Bunsen's "General Evangelical Hymn and Prayer-Book" is used. A hymn being sung, the House-father reads a text, which he draws by chance, after the fashion of the Moravian Text-Lottery. Then three boys read three other texts taken from that excellent little book called *Die Dreifaltige Schnur* (The Threefold File). Then the House-father reads a prayer from Bunsen's book. After

this the annual texts are read. Each children's family, and each Brethren's convict, has its own special text that stands for the whole year; and so also has the band of Candidats. These texts are communicated to the Brethren who are labouring outside the House, at the beginning of every year, and each Brother takes for himself the text of that convict of which he was a member when he lived in the House. Then two boys and two girls repeat one of the five chapters of Luther's short Catechism. This done the weekly text of each children's family is read by one of the boys belonging to it. While the text is being read, the whole assembly unites in repeating it in a low voice under the leadership of the Brother whose office it is to conduct the liturgical service. This is to express the union of the whole household with the special family whose text is being read. Nor is this text chosen at random, for the family have selected it at a private meeting convened for the purpose, and intend it as an expression of their feelings on reviewing the previous week. This reading is followed by a hymn, and a short silent prayer closes the first part of the service.

The second part consists of the reading and explanation of a portion of Scripture by the House-father.

The third part is devoted to the religious commemoration of certain anniversaries, and to the offering up of prayers and thanks for present and absent members of the household. First, all the birthdays both of present and of absent members, that fall on that day, are commemorated. And if it should happen to be any of the children's, the House-father selects a suitable text and

writes it in a little memorandum-book, which the child keeps for the purpose. Then all the baptismal days are mentioned, and texts selected and written for them. After these the anniversaries of the days on which the children were received into the House, or sent out of it, are remembered. A kind word is then addressed to those who are present, and some fit thought impressed on their hearts. After prayers have been offered up for the persons whose anniversaries were remembered, the service closes with the Lord's Prayer, repeated by one of the children, and with a hymn. On the first day of the month special prayers are offered up for kindred institutions and for the absent Brethren. At the close of each month those children whose birth or baptismal day happened in it repeat before the whole congregation the texts which they received.

This service, in its complete form, is held twice or three times a week, at half-past seven o'clock in the morning. It lasts about an hour. On other days the second part is omitted. The evening worship lasts only fifteen or twenty minutes. It consists of the reading of a portion of the New Testament, preceded and followed by a hymn.

With these services at the Rauhe Haus, each absent person, who ever lived at the Establishment, whether as a child, a Brother, or a teacher, is enabled to unite in spirit. Being provided with the required liturgical books, lists of texts and names, etc., he knows, whether he is in Syria or in Denmark, what prayers are offered up on such and such a day, and who they are for; he knows that on such a day he himself is prayerfully remembered before a

throne of grace, because it is his birthday, or his baptismal day, or the day on which he saw the Rauhe Haus for the first or for the last time. He is sure that, though he may have been absent from the House for years, he is not forgotten, but that his name is mentioned to those who came after him, and is kept in the memory of all who lived there with him. When he repeats his annual text, he knows that a thousand friends repeat it with him. When he sings his hymn, he knows that his voice mingles with a chorus which resounds from the Rauhe Haus all over the world. To Germans, who are gifted with that particular faculty of mind which they call *Gemuth*,—for which, by the way, there is no corresponding word in the English language, not because Englishmen have not the thing, but because they think proper to disguise it;—to Germans, I say, this form of enjoying mutual spiritual fellowship is exceedingly welcome. Much of it may be merely imaginary; but still it has a powerful influence upon the affections and the heart. By instituting this system of intercourse, Wichern has shown his knowledge of the spirit and character of his nation. It may have its disadvantages, inasmuch as it tends to sacrifice mental freedom to the power of routine. But it doubtless has also its advantages, inasmuch as it surrounds the whole man with a religious atmosphere, which helps to guard him against bad influences from without.

Owing to the admirable division of so many persons, both children and adults, into small families, the Rauhe Haus life has none of the monotony and mechanism of a wholesale training system. The decided Christian spirit which breathes through the whole Establishment, from

morning till evening, impresses the children with a feeling that their teachers are really in earnest about their true welfare, and serve them, not for profit but for Christ's sake. True, there is an aspect of gravity, seriousness, and sedateness about the entire household, which causes it to be sneered at by the infidel and light-minded part of the population of Hamburg. Accordingly, the Establishment, ever since its commencement, has had to bear many evil reports, which slanderous tongues are always eager to spread about those who do not believe that all religion is hypocrisy, and that all devotion is fanaticism. But one day's stay at the House is quite sufficient to show the impartial Christian visitor that the seriousness which characterises the institution is not kept up at the expense of the free development of natural human life. There is strict discipline, but it seldom needs to be supported by punishment. The self-respect of the family supersedes the rod and the prison. The severest chastisement inflicted is the practical application of the text that he who does not work shall not eat, and this has but rarely to be resorted to. When crime, such as theft, has been committed by any member of a family, the whole family is roused; and no higher authority is required to settle the matter, and bring the guilty one to a right state of mind. Along with this general respect for order, however, there is plenty of sport and fun and playful amusement. No inconsistency is thought to exist in allowing the same lips to pray to God at one time and to smile at a jest at another; or in permitting the same hands to be folded in devotion in the morning and to spin a top or to throw a ball in the afternoon. The children are often

at liberty to take a walk outside the House, and look upon the charming rural scenery around; or to go to town, to visit their friends, or to look at the ships, where they recognise many a *Rauhhäusler* among the sailors. They walk out, not in files, like soldiers, but in perfect freedom, like the children of any other family.

Moreover, there is a constant influx of strangers from all quarters of the globe, to visit this celebrated trophy of Christian charity, this admirable model of a Training Establishment. The list of visitors, which was begun in 1833, contained in 1861 nearly 16,000 names; and it may be calculated that this is not even one-fifth of the number of individuals who have really visited the place. There is no institution in the world where a child can see more people or learn better how to behave itself in the presence of strangers.

An excellent feature in the Rauhe Haus system is the *Patronage*, which was established in 1857. Its purpose is to form a link between the children and society at large. Each family of children has a Patron, who belongs to the richer class in Hamburg. He receives every month a written account of the principal events that have taken place in his family. At the close of each quarter the school reports of the conduct of the children are sent to him, and these he returns with his signature,—often bringing them back in person, and addressing a few words to the children, with reference to the marks against their names. When the family has a festival, or when some important event happens among them, the Patron is their guest. And once or twice a year he invites them in return to his house, and gives them an

entertainment in the circle of his friends. On his birthday, or on the birthdays of the members of his family, he receives congratulations from the Rauhe Haus family. When a child is going to be sent out, it visits its Patron, and acquaints him with its plans and wishes. Thus each child has a friend among the influential men of the town; and as Hamburg, through its mercantile connexions, is in correspondence with all parts of the world, this is of great importance, especially for such children as go to sea. A visit from the Patron is always a great event in the family. When he makes his appearance they are all immediately astir, and run out to meet him. This feature in the system cannot fail to have a beneficial influence upon the family spirit. It greatly promotes the feeling of self-respect, while it also impresses the minds of the little outcasts and vagabonds with the ennobling idea of a love which can forget and forgive all that is past, which can raise sunken ones to new life, and even inspire the hopeless with fresh vigour and joyful expectation.

IX.

Results of the Work, Rules and Regulations, Statistics, etc.

It is perhaps hardly necessary for me to say, after the details which I have already given, that Wichern and his committee take every possible care to provide the children with suitable situations when they leave the House.

The boys are apprenticed to master tradesmen, and the girls are sent to respectable service.

As to the results of the training of the children, special statistics are not given; but I will transcribe Wichern's own words, in which he gives the impression which an experience of twenty-eight years has left upon his mind :—

"When we look round the circle of individuals who as children were connected with our Rauhe Haus, we find ourselves carried to all parts of the world, even into the interior regions of Australia, where some of the most energetic and faithful of our pupils have pitched their tents. We also find them in all classes of society. One is a minister, one a student of theology, one a law student, several school teachers. We find among them officers of the German army, stewards of gentlemen's estates, merchants who are heads of respectable firms, directors of institutions for industry; horticulturists, lithographers, and xylographers; many master tradesmen, scattered through many towns, and journeymen mechanics, instructed in all sorts of handicraft. One is a sea captain; others are mates and sailors, who undertake voyages round the globe; some are colonists in America and Australia. We find amongst them, both at home and abroad, happy heads of families, fathers and mothers, who give to their children a good education, and train them up in the way in which they themselves were trained in our House. There are also servants and day labourers among them. And while some are well-to-do people, others are poor and pressed by heavy cares, and suffer sad experiences. And there are also

some upon whom all the trials of life seem to be lost. Grievous, however, as these things are, they ought not to mar the picture of the whole, which gives us so much reason to rejoice."

The admission of a child into the Establishment is effected by a written contract between its parents or guardians and a Board appointed for the purpose. This Board consists of the Director (Dr. Wichern), the Inspector (Mr. Riehm), a lawyer, and a medical man. The terms of the contract are simple. The parents or guardians of the child promise not to interfere with its education, nor to visit it without the permission of the Director. They cannot take back the child before the expiration of its regular time of pupilage, unless they repay what has been expended upon its support.

. The girls, who constitute one-third of the number of the children, and are divided into two families at the "Swallows' Nests," are under the care of "Sisters," who here find an opportunity of exercising themselves as female missionary agents. The Sisters usually number six. They are under the direction of Mrs. Riehm, who, with their assistance, teaches the girls all the work that is done in the kitchen, the wash-house, the laundry, and the sewing-room. They receive a salary with free board and lodging. Before 1861, thirty-four of them had been sent out, nineteen of whom continued to carry on the same work as they had devoted themselves to in the House.

The Brethren receive no salary, except a little pocket-money, with gratuitous instruction, and board and lodging. They stay three years at the House, and during the first year they must provide their own clothing. They

must pay too a trifle on entering and leaving, and also the cost of their books, which is from six to eight thalers (from eighteen to twenty-four shillings). They must be unmarried and unengaged.

The Brethren are supported by a fund, raised by voluntary contributions, and kept entirely separate from the finances of the House. Of that fund, as far as I could ascertain, no balance-sheet has been published, but during the year 1863 it amounted to about £450.

The income for 1863 was, in English money, about £2187, and the expenditure £1965, so that there was a surplus of some £122. In the balance-sheet the salary of Dr. Wichern is represented by ciphers.

The Direction, or Acting Committee of the Rauhe Haus consists of twenty-three members, including Dr. Wichern and Mr. Riehm. This body is divided into four sections; namely, the Committee for the children's establishment, which numbers eleven members; the Committee for the Institution of the Brethren and the Pensionat, five members; the Committee of the printing office; and the Committee for the publishing office. Dr. Wichern is a member of all four. The examination of the books of each section is entrusted to one of the other three.

The number of children living at the House during 1863 was on an average ninety-eight. On the 1st of January there were one hundred and one, sixty-seven being boys and thirty-four girls. Of these, thirteen boys and six girls were sent out, but twelve boys and six girls were admitted to take their place, so that at the close of the year the number of pupils amounted exactly to one hundred.

I have filled many pages with the description of this excellent work of Christian charity, and yet how imperfect is the picture which I have drawn. To obtain anything like a complete idea of the Rauhe Haus, one ought to see it with one's own eyes. And what one will see even then, important as it is, is but a small portion of the good work which, spread all the world over, finds its central point and mainspring at this wonderful spot.

The Rauhe Haus, though established after some other reformatories or poor schools, may yet be considered as the parent of a large number of Christian Charitable Institutions in Germany and in other countries; and the day of its foundation may be celebrated as the anniversary of one of the most important events in the history of the Christian Church during the present century.

NOTE.

The Establishment of St. John (*Johannesstiftung*) at Berlin is especially connected with Wichern's Inner Mission system, and, like the Rauhe Haus, owes its existence to his charitable activity. Like it, too, it is an institution for training home missionary agents, prison officers, sick nurses, etc. From the time of its foundation in 1858, till May 1864, thirty-two of the Brethren of St. John were sent out in the same way as those of the Rauhe Haus, of whose Brotherhood they are also members. In 1864 the Establishment, through the interposition of the Government, obtained possession of a large tract of wooded land in the immediate vicinity of the town, on which is being founded at present a Protestant Institution on the plan of Mettray; not exclusively, however, for young convicts, but also for young orphans and other homeless and helpless children. I have not seen this important institution, but from what I learn about it, through its printed reports and the communications of friends who have seen it, I gather that it must be a great work, especially in connexion with prison reform.

THE DEACONESS HOUSE AT KAISERSWERTH.

(RHENISH PRUSSIA.)

I.

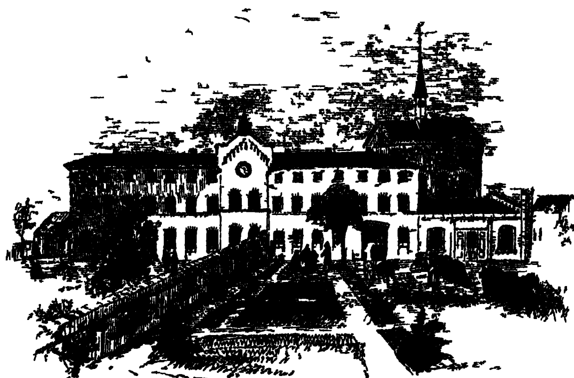
A Visit to Kaiserswerth – Gertrude Reichardt, the first Deaconess – A Glance at the Establishment at Kaiserswerth.

WHEN, in November, 1864, I visited the Kaiserswerth Establishment for the second time, and stood by the newly made grave that contained the mortal remains of its great and deeply-lamented founder, I was so struck with astonishment at the wonderful work which God, through the instrumentality of a weak human being, had performed, that I regretted I could not stay six months at the place, and write a special volume about what my eyes saw, and my heart enjoyed.

I entered one of the two main entrances of the building, and found myself in a simple flag-paved hall or passage. A woman guided me across a spacious garden to a row of buildings which ran parallel with the main establishment. One of these humble buildings is the dwelling of Mrs. Fliedner.

A deaconess guided me through the whole establish-

ment. It took me three hours to walk over its extensive premises, and to take a peep into the principal apartments At length, passing through a beautiful garden, we arrived at the *Feur-Abend Hause*—a beautiful symbolic name for a "House of Rest' for old deaconesses. *Feier-Abend* means the evening which precedes a great festival.



The House of Rest

The various buildings of the Colony of Kaiserswerth are ranged in six groups, between which are spacious and well-laid out kitchen and flower gardens

First comes the chief building, the so-called Mother House, which contains the dwelling-rooms and bedrooms for the deaconesses, the hospital for male and female invalids, the apothecary's room, the writing-room, etc At present 415 sisters are connected with this Establish-

ment, of whom 171 are probationers. They are divided into two classes,—*Nursing* and *Instructing* sisters. The former attend to the various wards, and are, in the men's ward, assisted by men-nurses. The latter, of whom there are 31, with 43 probationers, are trained for educational work. During the year 1863 not less than 789 invalids were nursed, of whom 260 were Roman Catholics and

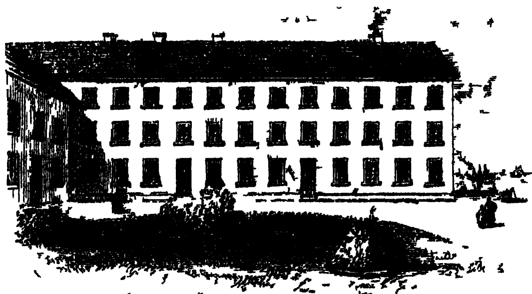


Deaconess Institution and Hospital at Kaiserswerth

eight Jews. Protestant as the Institution is, yet free admission is granted to the Roman Catholic priest to visit the members of his Church, and to administer extreme unction to the dying. Nor does the presence of Romanists hinder the mission-work which the deaconesses, under the direction of the Chaplain of the Establishment, carry on among the sufferers. All the invalids, no matter what denomination they belong to, hear every

day the Gospel read and explained. And every annual report contains touching instances of the conversion of individuals, who entered the Hospital in a state of ignorance or infidelity, and either left it or died, rejoicing in the God of their salvation

The Instructing Sisters are again divided into two classes, viz, Teachers of Infant schools and Teachers



Seminary for Schoolmistresses

of Girls' schools and other educational establishments When sent out to teach, two of them always go together, "in the same manner as the Lord sent out His disciples, so that they may strengthen one another mutually in their weakness" They exercise themselves in the practice of teaching at the Infant school of the Establishment (which is attended by from seventy to eighty children), at the Orphan house, at the Town school, or at the

Children's wards in the Hospital, and they receive their theoretical training at the Seminary, which is a spacious three-storied building with thirty-six windows in front.

The view from this house is very picturesque, having gardens on one side, and the Rhine on the other. Of the pupils who are trained here only a few are deaconesses, as most of them prepare themselves for independent situations. At the close of 1863, out of eighty-five pupils who were in the house, only twenty-two were deaconesses. The total number of teachers trained at this Establishment, since its commencement, amounts to 1007, who are scattered throughout the world, conducting hundreds of schools, from those for more advanced girls down to those for infants. It is gratifying and often touching to read the letters in which these teachers give an account of their work to Dr. Fliedner. And the testimonies to their usefulness borne by Christians, who live in the districts where they are labouring, are very strong.

The Infant school is the third building which attracts our attention. Certain recent alterations and repairs have made it an excellent and well-ventilated school-house. A large play-ground gives plenty of opportunity for recreation to the seventy or eighty children who here receive instruction every day. One of the deaconesses is the chief teacher. Assisted by a male teacher, she instructs her younger sisters in Infant school management.

Next comes the Female Orphan Asylum, which receives girls under twelve, who have lost one or both of their parents. They are not poor, but of rather respect-

able families, and are mostly daughters of clergymen and schoolmasters This house is at the same time intended to be a kind of training school for future deaconesses Ten of the present Kaiserswerth deaconesses were trained at this Orphan House The present number of pupils is twenty seven

The oldest of the Kaiserswerth institutions is the



Institution for Insane Women

House of Refuge for released Female Prisoners and Magdalens Since its foundation in 1833, 439 girls, either discharged prisoners or fallen women, have been received, and, after a residence of one or two years, provided with suitable situations The present number of inmates is thirty

The Institution for Protestant Insane Women of the educated class is a magnificent building, situated in a

pleasant garden. It contains forty rooms of various sizes, besides bath rooms, halls for social meetings, and musical entertainments, passages for walking exercise, a covered arcade used in wet weather, and a greenhouse which affords an opportunity for gardening even in winter. The medical direction of the House is in the hands of the Hospital physician, and Pastor Disselhoff attends to the spiritual treatment of the unhappy inmates. The physician and the pastor are assisted in their work by eighteen deaconesses. Of the fifty-five ladies who were discharged during the last three years, sixteen were perfectly cured, eleven were much improved, eleven were sent back uncured to their families, and twelve were removed to other establishments. During the year 1863 the House contained forty-one inmates, of whom twenty-six were suffering from melancholia.

I have already mentioned the House of Rest. But not only are the aged deaconesses cared for, there is also a place of retirement and refreshment for those who require rest and change of air. It is Salem, a pretty-looking farmhouse near Ratingen, seven miles from Kaiserswerth, situated at the foot of the woody hills through which the beautiful stream of the Anger flows. Here, in the midst of most charming and picturesque scenery, where in summer the fragrance of field and forest soothes the mind, and the freshness of mountain-air invigorates the system, the deaconesses have an opportunity of regaining the health which they have lost through their arduous labours at the sick-beds and in the schools of the poor. It is a true Salem, a house of peace for the weary, who here, in the company of

their sisters, spend some time in quiet communion with Him from whom they derive all their strength for the holy work they have devoted themselves to A small Filial-orphan House, as it is called, is also connected with this Establishment, and is under the superintendence of two deaconesses

Another Orphan House was founded at Altorf, near



Salem, near Krangen

Pless, in Upper Silesia It owes its origin to the typhus which raged in that district in 1848 The noble Count and Countess von Stolberg, residents of Pless, impelled by compassion for the orphans of those who fell victims to the epidemic, gave a building for their use, and put it under Fliedner's direction. The Government also sent a number of orphans from the neighbourhood, to have them trained in it as farm-servants About a yearly

average of eighty children have been sheltered, fed, clothed, and trained, at this excellent house of charity

So much for the institutions of Kaiserswerth And now, if we turn our eyes to the North, the South, the East, and the West, we will see not less than 96 stations



The Orphan House at Altorf

where 293 deaconesses are labouring under the direction of the Committee * Of these stations 78 are in the kingdom of Prussia, 7 in other German States, 4 in other European countries (at Constantinople, Bucharest, Florence, and Geneva), 4 in Asia, 1 in Africa (Alexan

* The Committee bears the name of "Direction of the Rhenish Westphalian Society for training and sending out (*Beschaftigung*) evangelical Deaconesses It consists of eight members Dr Fliedner was its Vice President and Secretary

dria), and 1 in America (Pittsburg). Eighty-six of them are Institutions belonging to corporations, societies, or communities, whom the Committee has agreed to supply with deaconesses. Forty-four of these Institutions are hospitals, or infirmaries; 11 schools; 5 poorhouses; 2 orphanages; 2 Protestant homes for maid servants; 2 deaconess-houses: 1 a school for the blind; and 1 a prison. The rest are local home missions, carried on by churches, which employ deaconesses as their agents. Most of these churches have 2 deaconesses in their service. In some of the hospitals from 3 to 6 deaconesses are employed: and at the new Charity house at Berlin there are 8 deaconesses.

During the Schleswig-Holstein War 28 deaconesses were engaged day and night in the hospitals at Gottorf (in the town of Schleswig), Apenrade, Hadersleben, Kolding, and Flensburg. That such able and zealous sick nurses would be invaluable, every one can understand. They were like consoling angels to the wounded Danes, as well as to their own countrymen. One day General Wrangel visited the Hadersleben hospital, where the deaconesses had daily to tend from sixty to seventy invalids. He here saw a Danish prisoner, with whom he conversed, through an interpreter, about the way in which he was taken prisoner, etc. "And are you content with the treatment here?" the General asked. "Content! content!" cried the Dane, in broken German, passionately rising up in his bed, and allowing no time for employing an interpreter: "Ay, ya, ya, General, thank, thank!" "All right, my son," the old General replied; "but let these Sisters, not me, have your

thanks." And with these words he cordially shook hands with the deaconesses.

The hardships and privations which these faithful friends of the sufferers sustained were not few. At Kolding, in Jutland, they had to wage a regular war with mice and other vermin. On one occasion a deaconess was summoned to some distant place at the dead of night. She flung her mantle round her shoulders, and took her seat in the post-chaise. At daybreak the coachman told her that she could not well go on in that strange dress: her mantle had no back, the mice having eaten it away!

The Kaiserswerth deaconesses kept up a cordial correspondence with their colleagues the deaconesses of Copenhagen, who were ministering to the Danish army. During the armistice two of them accepted an invitation from their Copenhagen sisters to favour them with a visit. The Queen, having heard of their arrival, kindly invited them to the palace, and expressed to them her gratitude for the care and love which they had shown to her wounded subjects.

Besides the six Institutions at Kaiserswerth, ten of the above-mentioned stations are under the direct control of the Committee as affiliated Institutions. These are:—

1. The Deaconess Educational School at Hilden, in Rhenish Prussia; with 7 deaconesses. 2. The Protestant Home for maid-servants at Berlin, with which an Infant School and a School for older girls are connected; with 14 deaconesses. 3. The Protestant Home for maid-servants at Derendorf, near Düsseldorf; with 4 deaconesses. 4. The Orphan House at Altorf; with 6 deaconesses. 5. The Deaconess Educational School at Florence, with

6 deaconesses. 6. The Deaconess Educational School at Smyrna; with 12 deaconesses. 7. The Deaconess House at Jerusalem; with 1 deaconess. 8. The Hospital at Alexandria; with 5 deaconesses. 9. The Orphan House at Bairouth; with 7 deaconesses. 10. The Boarding School at Bairouth; with 4 deaconesses.

The Deaconess Educational Schools are of a high class. I visited that at Florence in 1863. It is kept in a fine, large house, which has a beautiful and extensive garden attached. The property belongs to Madame Eynard, of Geneva, who, in the most liberal manner, allows the use of it rent-free. I never saw better accommodation in a first-class boarding school. There are a great number of large and well-ventilated apartments in the building, which has room for fifty boarders at least. As it was but recently opened, there were only thirteen; but in the day school there were sixty out-door pupils. Six deaconesses give instruction in different elementary branches. For French, Italian, English, music, etc., the first teachers of the town are engaged. German is taught by the deaconesses themselves. The importance of such a first-rate Protestant School in the centre of Roman Catholicism cannot be easily overrated. The solidity of the training and teaching is so generally acknowledged, that pupils from various countries and of all creeds come to the school. While abstaining from anything like direct doctrinal lessons, the deaconesses carry on their educational labours on a thoroughly evangelical basis. The Bible is *the* Book in all the classes, and the rule for the family-life in the house. Nor is the secular teaching in the least sacrificed to the religious. I was present at

a lesson in German literature which the chief deaconess gave to the first class. One of Schiller's masterpieces was read, and the pupils examined upon it; the pronunciation was so correct, that I could scarcely believe the readers to be Italians; and even a young Greek lady gave such answers to a few questions which I put to her as I could hardly have expected from a first-class pupil in a German academy.

If abundance of contributions be a proof of popularity, then the Kaiserswerth Institutions are exceedingly popular. Their list of donations and subscriptions for 1863 contains sixty-six closely-printed pages, each of two columns. These gifts are chiefly from Rhenish Prussia and Westphalia, being the two provinces in which the greater number of the deaconesses are labouring, and in which the Government permits annual collections to be made at the houses and in the churches. In this list there are only four donations from London of £6, 2s. in all, and one from Edinburgh of £15. The King heads the list with an annual subscription of 50 thalers (£7, 10s.); above which sum none of the annual subscriptions go. The greater part of them are under one thaler (3s.); and such an annual gift as 15 or 20 thalers rarely occurs. The donations, of course, show higher figures. Still they do not go beyond 400 thalers (£60), which sum occurs twice; and there are whole columns which do not go beyond one thaler. This seems to prove that the Kaiserswerth Institutions are mainly popular among the lower and middle classes. Even out of the 400 donations that were from Berlin, only 77 go higher than one thaler; and of these the greater number do not exceed two thalers.

Still, notwithstanding the comparative smallness of these gifts, the donations amounted to a little above 12,000 thalers (£1800), and the subscriptions to a little under 3000 (£450). The annual collection at the houses and in the churches yielded £650. The deaconesses earned £1490 by their services in the hospitals and private families, and this sum, after the deduction of £1012 for pocket-money, left a balance of £478. The whole income of the Establishment amounted to a little above 55,000 thalers (£8250), which was 4672 thalers (£700) less than the expenditure.

In the income table a sum of 5618 thalers (£843) is set down as accruing from the sale of books and engravings. There is a small publishing business in connexion with the Establishment. Its publications amount to between fifty and sixty, large and small, and excel by their amazing cheapness, as well as by their thoroughly evangelical and popular character. Among them a monthly journal, started sixteen years ago, and called "The Friend of the Poor and the Sick" (*Der Armen- und Krankenfreund*), ranks foremost. Its price is one shilling a year, and it is conducted by Pastor Disselhoff. It is ably written, and gives full information about the work of the deaconesses in particular, and also regarding the social and religious condition of the people, and mission-work in general.

II

Pastor Fliedner's Early Labours

At the time when Dr. Fliedner began his work, the Protestant Church in Germany was not ripe for taking any steps towards employing an official female agency. From the prisons, the hospitals, and the abodes of misery, crime, and destitution, Fliedner heard an alarming cry for help, which male agents, however willing to go to the rescue, could not respond to. A wise man once laid down this rule: "If a work must be done and nobody is inclined to do it, *I* must." This work had to be done; and there *was* nobody willing to do it, as it seemed. What then was left for a heart like Fliedner's, but to exclaim, "*I* must do it!"

He resolved on trying to call forth a band of Christian women, willing to devote their lives to the rescue of the lost, to the nursing of the sufferers, to the training of the neglected. Nor was the idea such a novelty as German Protestants at first supposed it to be. Vincent de Paul had set the example two hundred years before, by founding his institution of Sisters of Charity in the Roman Catholic Church. And Mrs. Fry, whose celebrity had become European, gave proof that Protestant women did not need to go to Rome to learn the practice of Christian love. It was her example, indeed, which inspired Fliedner. She showed that a Christian woman, when fitly trained, is able to find access where the way is closed to men; that the gentle touch of her finger may

smooth roughnesses where the pressure of a man's hand would fail.

Fliedner was a poor young Candidat of twenty-two, when in 1822 he took charge of the church at Kaiserswerth, which was one of the smallest and poorest parishes of the Prussian Church. He was scarcely settled in his new sphere when his congregation was thrown into utter poverty, and partly dispersed, by the failure of a manufacturing firm which employed nearly all its members. The presbytery offered the poor young minister another church, but he declined to leave his flock.

This was the pivot upon which Fliedner's life turned. To be able to carry out his great work he had to see and to learn many things for which the small village of Kaiserswerth afforded no opportunity. He must be made acquainted with the wants of the suffering and neglected population of his country, and then learn the way to supply them. His church was in debt, and, owing to the above-mentioned catastrophe, his people were unable to pay it. He would make a tour of the province in which he resided, with a view of collecting money to make up the deficiency. On this journey he made the acquaintance of the leading men in the Church, and especially in the sphere of Christian philanthropy. Their conversation enabled him to cast a glance into the depths of misery which prevailed among the lower classes, in the prisons and in the hospitals. He returned home to his flock with the glad intelligence that he was able to pay their most urgent debts. But fresh difficulties arose. It was quite absurd to expect that these poor people would be able to meet the annual

expenditure of their church and school; so Fliedner resolved to try to collect an endowment for both, and this time he directed his steps to Holland and Great Britain.

He set out on his travels in 1823, and he obtained money in abundance; but he carried back with him a greater treasure than even the gold of England or the silver of Holland; and this was a thorough knowledge of the chief philanthropic and charitable institutions of the two countries. "On my journey through those evangelical countries," he wrote some twenty years ago, "I became acquainted with a great many institutions for the cure both of body and soul: schools and educational establishments, poorhouses, orphanages, and hospitals, Bible and missionary societies, etc. In August 1824 I returned home full of admiration and gratitude, but at the same time ashamed that we Germans allowed ourselves thus to be excelled in works of Christian love, and especially that we had hitherto cared so little for our prisons."

It was precious seed which he brought home, and he failed not to sow it as soon as he could, and with all carefulness. "The smallness of my church," he wrote, "allowed me more leisure time than my colleagues had at their disposal. My experience in other countries had opened my eyes to discover the faults of my own, and I felt it my duty to try to redress them."

The populous town of Düsseldorf, not far from Kaiserswerth, had a large prison, the inmates of which were shut out not only from society, but also from all religious instruction. The young minister obtained permission

from the Government to preach every alternate Sunday afternoon to the Protestant portion of the prisoners. His first sermon to them was preached on the 9th of October 1825. "My chapel," he wrote, "was not very inviting: two sleeping-rooms with the bed-straw piled up in a corner, and a doorway between them, where I stood, that I might be heard by the women on one side and the men on the other."

A society for prison reform was now established after the English pattern; and those horrible jails, which hitherto had been filthy dens and scenes of the lowest immorality, were gradually turned into places fit for the habitation of human beings, besides being provided with sufficient means for making the inmates better members of society.

Pastor Fliedner was the heart and soul of the society. And in order still further to qualify him for what was to be his life-work, he undertook a second visit to Holland in 1827, and another to England and Scotland in 1832. Here he made the acquaintance of Elizabeth Fry, of Dr. Chalmers, and of many others gifted with rare talents for rescuing perishing men.

He felt he was ready for his work now, and looking up to God, he put his hand to the plough, never to loosen his grasp till death stiffened his fingers. An asylum for discharged female convicts was the first thing wanted. People laughed at the idea of such a class remaining in a house, the door of which would be open all day. Fliedner's excellent wife, who, from love to the lost and the neglected, taught some years in the reformatory of Düsselthal, joined him with all her heart. Their little

garden-house was given up for the purpose. This hap pened in 1833. The next year the garden-house was too small. A larger place was procured, and friends sent in their contributions for the work. But the garden-house did not remain empty. The little children of the factory people were invited to fill it during the day. A good girl, a member of Fliedner's church, offered her services as teacher. She began a knitting school, which in 1836 was enlarged into an infant school for poor children of all denominations, organised after the pattern of Wilderspin's Infant School at Spitalfields.

But now the sick people were to have their turn. An hospital was what was wanted,—an hospital under the control of Christian love and the care of Christian nurses. A large house was for sale. Fliedner had no money, but he bought the building. On the day of payment some good friends advanced the required sum. But the whole town was astir when it was known that the premises were to be converted into an hospital. Fliedner, however, allowed the people to talk, and did his work, and the work proved the best answer to all their complaints.

But no sooner was the hospital set agoing than the want of fit nurses was felt. And where were they to be got? Of course there were nurses at the different hospitals, but what sort were they? They were mostly persons who, after having failed at every other employment, had taken to sick-nursing as a last refuge from starvation. Fliedner perceived that an institution for training females as sick nurses was urgently wanted. Gertrude Reichardt, the first Christian young woman who

entered Fliedner's deaconess-house, was the pioneer of a numerous band of servants of God scattered over the world, who in self-denying love and humble patience devote their lives to the nursing of the sick, the instruction of prisoners, the education of children, and the consolation of the poor and the afflicted.

An asylum for discharged female convicts, an infant school, an hospital, a deaconess-house—those four little seeds were sown in humility and weakness, in fear and trembling, but not unaccompanied with the voice of fervent prayer which rose up to God day and night. And God heard that prayer and gave the increase, and spread His protecting hand over the tender little plants, so that they could defy the summer's drought and the winter's frost.

III

Character and Influence of Pastor Fliedner

We are ready to suppose that a man who, like Fliedner, originates a great and extensive work must be gifted with extraordinary physical strength; that, at least, he must be a tall, stout man, whose imposing form inspires awe, whose look beats down all resistance, and whose voice silences every contradiction. Many of the thousands of strangers who visited Kaiserswerth to make the acquaintance of the celebrated Fliedner entered his house with

the sure expectation of seeing such a man. But they saw almost the opposite of what they expected. Fliedner was a meagre, simple, unassuming person of middle stature, with thin fair hair, a high forehead, a long straight nose, bright shrewd eyes, and sharply cut lips. He was no orator, no poet, no *bel esprit*. In short, he was not a man of words, but of deeds. But when he spoke he always hit the nail on the head. He was gifted in a high degree with the talent of distinctness in speaking. He did not care much, however, for the beauties of style. He spoke quickly, with rather restless, stiff, angular movements of the hands. On the whole his æsthetic sense was not much developed. Among the many and large buildings which he called into existence at Kaiserswerth there is not one that rises much above the barrack style, but they are all patterns of practical arrangement and useful accommodation.

Undoubtedly the prominent feature in Fliedner's character was the unflinching, indefatigable, faithfulness with which he threw himself body and soul into what he considered to be his duty. He was a man of "one casting," as the Germans say. From the moment he was convinced of the necessity of the Deaconess institution he had neither heart nor soul but for that object. Wherever he was, whether in the company of friends, at meetings of the Synods, in the circle of his family, or at public assemblies, the cause of the deaconesses was the only theme on his tongue. The anecdotes illustrative of this feature in his character are as numerous as they are amusing and instructive.

He was the first to rise in the morning, and the last to

go to bed at night. Of making himself comfortable he had no idea, nor had he any talent for sitting down and enjoying a quiet homely chat. He never smoked, because it consumed too much time and cost too much money. In this respect he differed from good Father Zeller, of Beuggen, than whom no German could more heartily enjoy his pipe. "When I call upon a man of distinction to ask a favour," Zeller often said, "and I notice a pipe or a cigar-box on the mantel-piece, my hopes rise fifty per cent. at once, and I am almost sure of success." One needed only to see Fliedner at dinner to perceive that he was a man who could enjoy nothing but hard facts. He would eat with the quickness of passengers travelling by an express train snatching a hurried mouthful at the railway refreshment-rooms. During his meals he would read the numerous letters which every post brought; and he answered many of them in waiting-saloons, and in steamboats, for he always carried a complete writing apparatus in his bulky coat-pocket. Still nobody ever heard him complain of his "heavy engagements." It never happened to him in his life to be too late for a journey, though his journeys were numberless. Even the word which he always wrote when trying a quill was characteristic. It was the word *hurtig* (quick). And trying quills (he never wrote with steel pens, as he could not get on quick enough with them) was not an everyday business with him. It was astonishing to observe the length of time a quill would last him. He once wrote nine months with one quill without its being ever mended. I wonder how much time it would have taken to read one of his letters! He would hurry

with great swiftness through one of his establishments, and yet notice everything that was wrong. His was the rare talent of not overlooking small things while engaged in great ones. At the period of his life when he was both director of a large establishment and pastor of a parish, he never neglected visiting his flock. Nay, he was often found toiling through mud and snow to visit one of the most distant members of his widely-scattered charge.

This faithfulness and deep sense of duty, is all the more to be admired when it is remembered that his constitution, tough as it was, had on his Eastern journey sustained a shock from which it never recovered. From that period he was attacked by a severe illness every year; and each time it brought him to the brink of the grave. During the last ten years of his life he was subject to decided consumption of the lungs, which was accompanied by a fearful cough that troubled him both day and night. His life now hung, as it were, by a thread. All who closely observed him looked upon its continuation as almost a miracle. He himself was quite aware of his state, and submitted, from a sense of duty, to all the means which were prescribed for his recovery; but he showed not the slightest sign of anxiety, and went on labouring and toiling with might and main. While in a condition in which others would have taken to their easy chair, or to their bed, he continued till the last day of his life dictating letters when the intervals of the cough would allow him. It was no use trying to persuade him to take rest.

It may be easily conceived that a man who was thus

constantly at work would not permit his servants or fellow-labourers to take their ease. Many could not continue with him, and among these some who could hardly be called slow. His quick, impulsive disposition met with more admiration than imitation. Those whose minds were like a fine-stringed harp found it hard to stay with him, and soon left him. He was a stern, sharp man, who would sometimes burst into a passion, and by his hasty judgments hurt the feelings of others. Still, those who were in right good earnest in the work could bear with all this. His establishments were ruled by severe laws, which admitted of no exceptions, and would, to those who looked at them from a distance, appear at variance with the spirit of grace. He did not like to be contradicted, but he was not revengeful. He was seldom loved, often feared, but always highly esteemed. And every sensible person will admit that with so many hundreds of women collected from all quarters of the globe, committed to his direction, order could not possibly have been kept had not the reins been in the grasp of a firm hand.

When one looks at the extensive work founded by Fliedner, which, as it were, dots Europe with institutions of charity and instruction, and spreads a numerous band of nurses and teachers over the world, one cannot help being struck with surprise and admiration, even when viewing it merely as a product of administrative skill. If such a work were put into the hands of a military bureau, or a government office, what a staff of officials, inspectors, surveyors, clerks, and travelling agents would be required

to keep it going in order! And how little progress would perhaps be made after all! At Kaiserswerth a single man, assisted by a few friends, ruled the whole system. He stood, as it were, a Colossus, with one foot on the shore of the Baltic, and the other on the bank of the Jordan. He was able to do this from the fact that the deaconesses are not the dead parts of a clumsy machine, but the living organs of an animated body. As in a Gothic building each constituent part, from the largest window down to the smallest rosette in the ornamental carving, represents the spirit and form of the whole structure; so each member of this large sisterhood contains in herself the ruling principles and methodizing habits which characterise the whole body. Each one of them is a Fliedner, so to speak, in her own sphere, needing no control to secure honesty of principle, and but very little to prevent rashness of practice. In its main features, the work of each one of them is recognisable at once as a fruit of the Kaiserswerth tree; yet it bears the special stamp of the character of the individual who carries it on. There is an agreeable unity, not uniformity—a sweet harmony, not monotony—breathing through the labours of all the sisters. This is the wonderful effect of their conscientious moral and religious training at Kaiserswerth.

But besides this unity of spirit there is also a unity of life. This is the natural consequence of their training as one family, under certain rules which continue to be observed as much as possible by those who are labouring at distant places. "They take their meals together, have family worship twice a-day, hold a fortnightly con-

ference, and a monthly meeting. Their birthdays are kept, as in every German household, and also the days of their confirmation to the diaconate. They use a common psalm-book, tabulated for daily reading, a Bible similarly and excellently arranged, and a common hymn-book; and they have one of Scriver's parables read at dinner. These are sufficient bonds to link the absent with those in the house, and to bring before them the reality of their being both a separated and a united body."*

In all this there is not much danger of turning their sisterhood into a monastic order, though perhaps some might ask why such care should be taken to keep up unity in visible things? If it be in order to strengthen their spiritual union, they would perhaps say, that that spiritual union must be rather weak. But I would not go that length. True affection is sometimes pleased with visible remembrances of those whom it loves, and for some minds there is pleasure in reading a chapter or singing a hymn which they know is at the same moment being read or sung by all their friends. This may seem childish to others, but love is often a child, and it may have its own way when there is no harm in it.

* Stevenson, *Praying and Working*, p. 239.

FATHER ZÈLLER'S SCHOOL AT BEUGGEN. NEAR BASLE.

(GRAND DUCHY OF BADEN)



I

The Two Friends

THE famous warrior, Bernhard Duke of Weimar, who, at the close of the Thirty Years' War defeated Johann von Werth and sent him a captive to Paris, little thought that the place where he fixed his head-quarters would, two centuries later, be the abode of a band of happy little children. This place is the Castle of Beuggen, now in the territory of the Grand Duke of Baden, near the frontier of Switzerland, and only ten miles distant from the venerable town of Basle It stands on a charming spot on the right bank of the Rhine, where that magnificent stream flows with a sharp curve, between Säckingen and Rheinfelden, two places well known to those who have studied the history of the great Thirty Years' War. It is the centre of a quiet little valley, below the turnpike road which winds up to Constanz, overshadowed by a verdant vine-hill. On passing one of the two bridges which span the moat surrounding the

Castle, you walk through a gate of mediæval structure into a spacious yard or square, where stands a clump of ten thickly-foliaged chestnut-trees casting their cool shade over a large circular basin of water. To the right you observe the half-decayed ruins of the old Castle, built probably in the days of the Hapsburgs, and contrasting romantically with the more recent architecture of the new Castle, which dates from the commencement of the Seven Years' War. This latter lifts its gigantic form proudly in the midst of the square, being in height only surpassed by the steeple of the Castle Chapel, which, though part of the Castle, is not used for the same purpose, being the property of the Roman Catholic clergy of the neighbourhood. The Castle itself has been selected for a work intended to evince the wonderful power of that exclusively Protestant maxim—the Bible, and nothing but the Bible! Its thirty-two apartments, large and small, are occupied by upwards of a hundred individuals, adults and children, who, with the spiritual sword of God's Word, fight the noble battle against sin, and its fearful consequences—degradation, destitution, and misery, both temporal and eternal. It is worth while to ascend the clean oak-steps of the broad flight of stairs that leads up to the spacious school and dwelling rooms on the first floor, and to the bed-rooms on the second. You will enjoy the roomy landing-places and wide passages, the lofty ceilings of the apartments, the stream of light and fresh air that pours in through the strong-framed windows, and the cheerful aspect of the *ensemble*, where the privileges of ancient princely magnificence are so happily turned to the profit of the needy, the neglected,

and the outcast. And when, after a little panting and perspiring, you have reached the top of this grand building, you will find your trouble fully repaid by an enchanting view of the Rhine valley, encircled towards the south by the evergreen Jura Mountains, and towards the north by the Black Forest.

But delightful as a visit is to this charming place in the present day, it must have been very dismal to those who visited it immediately after the War of Liberation. At that period the Castle of Beuggen presented an aspect of misery and desolation. For three years, from 1814 till 1817, it was a hospital for the wounded soldiers of the Austrian army. At the close of the war it was abandoned by its numerous inmates, who left eight thousand of their comrades buried in the fields around the Castle moat. It was left as it stood on the last day it was occupied, uncleaned and unswept, showing everywhere the disgusting marks of the misery which thousands of wretched creatures had suffered under the scalpel of the surgeon and amid the agonies of death. In this state of filthiness and desolation it continued for years, avoided by everybody; or, if visited at all, only at night by thieves, who carried off whatever booty they could find. Its sole inhabitants were the owl and the bat, who could here rear their young in peace. And in such a condition this once attractive spot might have continued till now, had it not become the abode of Christian love, which, wherever it comes, turns death into life, casts out everything unclean, and calls up a fountain of pure living water for the weary and the thirsty.

It will be interesting to learn the origin of this re-

markable change, with which a still more important change, in the soul and life of many a lost human being, is connected.

One autumn afternoon of the year 1816 two men were walking up and down the spacious square yard, which, planted with rows of beautiful trees, graces the rear of the Münster-Kirche at Basle. They were evidently engaged in a conversation which engrossed their whole heart and soul. Was it the somewhat melancholy aspect of the withering creation around, the crackling of the yellow leaves carpeting the path on which they trod, and the chilly autumnal blasts moving the tops of the trees to and fro, and moaning through the leafless branches, that cast a gloom over their minds and caused the serious expression of their countenances? Perhaps it was to some extent. But the chief cause of the concern which so deeply filled their souls was the thought pressing upon them of a decay far more awful and alarming than that of withering leaves and drooping flowers. Their conversation ran on the dreadful state of neglect and misery in which the greater portion of Christendom was left by the recent wars. The condition of the lower classes, and especially of the children, was distressing beyond description. "I visited a small district the other day," one of the two friends said, "where I found upwards of a hundred children who were destitute of any instruction whatever; and, upon entering the huts in which they dwelt, I almost sickened at the spectacle of misery and wretchedness I witnessed. One-sixth of the children of our country are without shelter or support, rambling about in perfect vagabondism. Twice I saw some of

these homeless creatures, driven from one canton to another, starving on the public road. Two little boys were found crouching by the dead body of their mother. What is to be done to stop this fearful evil, which gnaws like a cancer at the very root of our national existence? If Christianity is a power unto salvation, is it not here that it ought to show itself, as the only agency which is truly able to save human society from ruin?"

The gentleman who gave this sad description of the condition of the children of the lower class was Mr. Christian Heinrich Zeller, then School-director at Zofingen, a pretty town in the canton of Aargau. He was little aware at that moment that this conversation with his friend Mr. Spittler, the celebrated founder of the Basle Mission House, was the first step towards a work which would one day give to his name a European celebrity, and serve as a monument of grateful love in the hearts of all Christian philanthropists, as well as in those of thousands of rescued children. The two friends had just returned from a visit to the Mission House, and thought with pleasure of the resolute young men whom they had seen there preparing themselves to carry the Gospel to the heathen world. Far below their feet, at the bottom of the high wall from which they enjoyed the charming view that stretched out before their eyes, old Father Rhine was rolling along, bending with a graceful curve round the old town, and preparing to take leave of his native land, to carry his fertilising blessings to France, Germany, and the Netherlands. "Alas!" said Mr. Zeller, "it seems to me as if the blessed Gospel river is also preparing to leave our poor fatherland, to pour its costly treasures over the

fields of far distant countries. I cordially wish the poor heathen to drink its quickening waters; but why should our own people, who are in no better condition than the blind heathen of Asia, be deprived of these life-giving draughts? We have just been visiting a school for training teachers of the Gospel for the inhabitants of Hindostan and Africa. What a blessing this Institution would be, if, at the same time, it were a school for training Christian School teachers for the poor people of Switzerland and Germany! For they are the class of persons whom our sadly-neglected communities are fearfully in need of. You know how completely destitute of any Christian school teaching our poorer districts are, because no teacher can be found willing to bury himself in such abodes of neglect and destitution. If Christian charity deems it necessary to train up young men for work among the heathen, surely it cannot but desire that young men should likewise be summoned, in the name of Christ, to devote themselves with self-denying love to the rescuing of the perishing children of our own nation. And if the Mission House, while fulfilling one part of its duty, does not wish to leave the other undone, it must, it appears to me, be thrown open to every Christian young man who wishes to become a schoolmaster to the poor."

Mr. Zeller here took leave of Mr. Spittler, and repaired to his home, where he soon forgot all about their conversation in the bustle of his schools and the numerous occupations of his directorship. But his words kindled a fire in the heart of the noble founder of the Mission House which nothing could quench. The winter passed

on without Mr. Zeller hearing anything about the matter; but no sooner had the spring returned to the valleys of the Alps than he received a letter from Mr. Spittler, requesting him to write down his thoughts on the institution of a Missionary Schoolmaster Establishment. This invitation was as unexpected by Mr. Zeller as must have been by young Samuel the voice which called his name at midnight. He felt quite unprepared for it, and, burdened with school business and examinations as he was, he could hardly find one moment to give his mind to the subject. But it was with him as with his friend some months ago. Mr. Spittler had now, in his turn, thrown a spark into Mr. Zeller's bosom, which, in spite of all his occupations, set his whole soul on fire. The idea followed him into his school, and came out with him again. It went with him to bed, and awoke with him in the morning. One evening the whole plan stood as clearly before his mind as if he saw the proposed Establishment rising out of the ground, and working in all the branches of its organisation. He took his pen, and wrote down an elaborate paper at one sitting. Mr. Spittler read it with enthusiasm, and caused it to be circulated among the friends of the Mission. Among these, too, the plan met with unanimous approbation. Letters were received from different quarters promising every assistance that could be afforded. The only objection which was felt by any regarded the union of the Establishment with the Mission House. This part of the scheme was dropped in consequence, and it was resolved to found a "Voluntary School for training Schoolmasters for the Poor." The main features of the plan were these:—

"A number of poor, fatherless, and neglected children should be taken into a spacious, well-appointed building, situated in the country, and not too far from Basle, where they should be instructed in the most important branches of elementary education, in gardening and domestic labour, and in various kinds of handicrafts. In connexion with this a band of Christian young men should be trained as teachers of poor children."

The idea was warmly taken up by many Christian friends, and enthusiastically discussed in various circles. On the evening of the 31st of September 1817, twelve individuals met at Basle, and committed the matter in prayer to God. They took one another by the hand, and solemnly pledged themselves, in the presence of God, to do whatever might be in their power, in order to carry their hearts desire into effect. They then united themselves into a "Society for training Voluntary Schoolmasters for the Poor."

II.

How a House of Death and Desolation was changed into an Abode of Life and Joy.

No sooner was this union of Christian friends made public, than encouraging letters and gifts poured in from different quarters. Among the latter there was a pretty little case sent in by a lady whose name is not recorded.

It contained a costly gold box, with a note saying, "Do with this box what Mrs. von Oinhausen once did with a brilliant ring presented to her—that is, found a school; and may the Lord vouchsafe His abundant blessing upon it!" Mr. Spittler set himself to work at once, and wrote a hundred tickets, each valued at one *Louis d'or* (18s. 4d.), and distributed them among his friends, in order that they might be sold as shares in a lottery. The hundred tickets were soon taken, chiefly by friends in Basle and the neighbourhood, so that the Society had a capital of £91, 13s. 4d. to begin with. The box was drawn by a Basle lady, who made the Society a present of it. Mr. Spittler resolved to repeat the process, but in a wider circle. Again a hundred shares were taken, and a second time the box yielded a hundred *Louis d'or* to the Society. The person who was so fortunate as to draw it this time followed the good example of his predecessor, and restored it to Mr. Spittler.

Gifts now came flowing in in continuous succession. Among them was a promise from the British and Foreign School Society, London, of £100, payable on the day when the Establishment would be opened. The first thing required now was permission from the Government to build a house on the Basle territory. The Government, however, kept the matter so long under consideration, that the whole of the year 1818 passed without any result; and, as the price asked by the owner of the desired site was extravagant, the Society resolved to leave Basle, and try its fortune in the adjacent Grand Duchy of Baden. In the spring of 1819 a friend, who had thrown her whole heart into the undertaking, the widow of the late Pro-

fessor Fäsch, and who had some influence in high circles, advised the Society to apply to the Baden Government for the use of the Castle of Beuggen. But it was in vain: the Baden Government declined the request at once. The Society then turned its attention to another castle, likewise situated in Baden, at no great distance from Basle. It happened that about this time the Grand Duke Lewis, who had recently succeeded to the throne, made a tour through his territory, and was expected at Börrach, a town on the Basle frontier. The Basle magistrates resolved to send a deputation to congratulate His Royal Highness. Among the deputies was a friend of the Society, who availed himself of this opportunity to present a memorial to the Duke, in which the plan of the Establishment was briefly described, and permission asked to buy or lease a suitable site on his territory. The Duke received the petition with great kindness, put some questions to the gentleman who handed it to him, and said, "I would look upon such an Establishment as a great blessing to my country." He promised to send his decision in writing in a short time, and the deputy returned joyfully to Basle, to report the good news to his friends.

But again the patience of the Society was put to the test. The Duke had received such a heap of memorials and petitions that the Basle one disappeared among them, like a grain of wheat in a bushel of chaff. Week after week elapsed, but the post brought no document graced with the ducal seal. The Society then deemed it proper to send a deputation to His Highness, to remind him of his promise. The two friends, Messrs. Spittler

and Zeller, were appointed. They set out for Karlsruhe on the 16th of October, 1819. The journey from Basle to Karlsruhe, which may now be easily performed in a few hours, then took about two days and two nights. The two friends had got by the stage-coach as far as the town of A—, when, to their vexation, they became aware that in their hurry they had forgotten to take their passports with them. What were they to do? To go on and take their chance would be rather reckless. Fortunately they remembered that a friend lived in A—, who was widely known throughout Baden. There was just time to call upon him and to acquaint him with their predicament. He at once got himself ready, and proceeded with them, to act as their passport. This plan proved successful; and the three friends arrived, tired, but happy, at their hotel at Karlsruhe. Immediately they set out to deliver their letters of introduction to the influential men they were directed to. There was the Minister of Finance, Herr von Fischer, and the Councillor of State, Herr von Sensburg, and the Minister of Outer and Inner Affairs, Freiherr von Berstett, and several other Herr vons, who might be able to throw a little influence into the scale in favour of the Poor School. The last-mentioned gentleman, who had accompanied the Duke on his tour through the country, and had been present at the presentation of the petition, promised to bring the matter before the Duke. To their great joy, he informed them the next day that His Highness wished to speak to them in person, and that they were expected at the ducal palace at four o'clock, P.M.

The iron hammer of the belfry of the cathedral of

Karlsruhe was just about to give four strokes on the gigantic bell, when the two Swiss friends stepped into the hall of the ducal residence. A *valet-de-chambre* made his appearance, and, in a kind tone, told them that they had better come back at five, since His Highness had not yet returned from the chase. This advice was punctually attended to, but the Duke was not yet at home. Sorely disappointed, they returned to their hotel, and spent the evening in painful misgivings. They committed the matter to the King of kings, and went to bed to spend a sleepless night, brooding over what might come in the way to frustrate their heart's desire. Of course they awoke rather late, and were just dressing, when a knock was heard at their bedroom door, and in stepped an individual, clad in crimson from top to toe.

"Are you the two gentlemen from Switzerland?" he said to the deputies, one of whom was engaged in washing, and the other in shaving.

"We are."

"His Royal Highness invites you to call at half-past nine. He wants to speak to you in person."

Off went the apparition, and the two friends looked at one another thunderstruck. There was not much time to spare, but punctually at the hour they were standing at the door of the ducal mansion. The affable *valet-de-chambre* of yesterday took them into an ante-chamber, and left them alone. There they stood with throbbing hearts. Steps were heard. A door was opened, and in came the Duke, clad in blue uniform, with red cuffs, laced collar, and a star on his breast. Dignity and affability

were harmoniously blended in his countenance. He kindly inquired after the object of their petition; and when Mr. Zeller had told him all about it, he said: "I am very much pleased with this plan; but by what means do you propose to found and support your Establishment?"

"May it please your Grace," Mr. Zeller replied, "we have no other fund than the mercy of God, who is mighty to move the hearts of the friends and benefactors of the poor. Indeed, we have already received so much encouraging support from Switzerland, Germany, and England, and from so many unknown friends, that we feel warranted to begin the work in the name of God."

"Mr. Zeller then told the Duke the story of the gold box, which greatly pleased him.

"That's good," said the Duke; "but I really am puzzled as to what building I can offer you. Would you like Beuggen?"

This question was to them like a bright sunbeam suddenly piercing through a fog. They had dropped every thought of Beuggen long since. Undoubtedly it was the best building for their purpose that could be imagined; far better than the Castle of Bürgli, on which they had fixed their thoughts after Beuggen was refused.

"To tell the truth," the Duke said, "I cannot sell you Beuggen. It is, with some other valuable property, destined as an indemnity to the Prince of Thurn and Taxis, to cover his expenses in conducting the post in these parts of Germany. But I may lease the Castle to you. Only you must take it on mere chance. You may have it for years; but, on the other hand, it may be taken

from you within a short time. If you have no objection to lease it under these circumstances, I will let it to you at an annual rent of 60 florins (£5), with six months' notice."

"Most gracious Prince," Mr. Spittler replied, "we are prepared to take it on these conditions, as we undertake the whole affair, trusting in the mercifulness of our God; and we give to your Royal Highness our cordial thanks for this goodness and grace, which we accept with joy."

The next day, being Friday, the 22d of October, exactly the same day on which four years before the two friends for the first time discussed the matter behind the Basle Münster-Kirche, they found themselves at the Government office, to receive the required documents. They at once set out for Basle, where they arrived on Sunday afternoon. On the same evening a meeting of the Society was called, at which Mr. Zeller gave an account of their journey to the metropolis of Baden; and when he related their conversation with the Duke, and Mr. Spittler produced the documents, with the Duke's seal and signature, the whole company burst out into general applause. All the friends rose and embraced each other with tears of joy. The President, who, in spite of indisposition, had come to the meeting, felt all at once relieved by the glad news, and engaged in prayer, thanking God for this unexpected result. Mr. Zeller was then appointed to examine the Castle, and to report as to what was required to put it in a state of repair.

He found it in a most miserable condition. There

was not one unbroken window in the whole building. The fine brass-locks, which used to adorn the doors, were all stolen, and so were the large iron stoves, without which no German parlour is comfortable. Heaps of straw were scattered through the rooms and saloons; and everywhere there was dirt, and blood, and rubbish. The paper was torn from the walls; and even the iron hooks and bolts, which had fastened the frame-work of the roof, were carried off. Still the building could be repaired, though not without considerable expense. The apartments on the ground floor were designed for workshops, dining-room, and kitchen; the large saloon, on the first floor, for a school-room and a place for family-worship; the other rooms on that floor were partly assigned as a dwelling for the house-mother, partly as bedrooms for the girls. There was also a large apartment for a storeroom, and another for an infirmary. The Director was to have his dwelling on the second floor, where there was also plenty of accommodation for the female teachers. The rooms of the third floor were appropriated as dormitories for the boys, and for the young men who were to be trained as schoolmasters. A numerous band of workpeople was then engaged to put the building in order, according to this plan; and on the 1st of November, 1819, Mr. Zeller received a letter from the Society, in which he was entreated to take the Directorship of the new Establishment.

III.

How Mr. Zeller made many rich by making himself poor.

Now, a better man than Zeller could not have been chosen. He was a born pedagogue. In his youth his father designed him for the law, and sent him to the university; but no position in society, however splendid, could, in his judgment, outshine that of a good schoolmaster. It was therefore with joy that he sacrificed the prospect of becoming a *Hofrath* for the humble situation of tutor in a private family. Here his talents as a teacher gained him such reputation that a number of respectable citizens of St. Gallen requested him to take charge of a private school, which they had established in order to provide their children with better training and instruction than could be obtained at the public schools of that town. This school became, under Zeller's direction, a pattern of good, solid, popular teaching; and such was the effect of his admirable labours that the town-council of Zofingen called him, in 1809, to be director of the public school there, while the magistrates of the canton of Aargau appointed him Inspector of the Schools of the district. At Zofingen, which is one of the most charming spots in Switzerland, he passed a happy life, in which the comforts of affluence were combined with the privileges of intelligent social intercourse and the blessings of a useful sphere of labour. He was the centre and soul of the lively and spirited educational life of the district. In addition to his directorship of the town school and

his inspectorship of the district schools he was head teacher at the Latin school, and catechist of the Church *Vor dem Wald.* He also conducted an evening class for female teachers, at which he became acquainted with Miss Sophie Siegfried, who was teacher at the first ladies' school of the town. She became his wife; but being, like her husband, a thorough teacher, she continued her labours at the school, even when, as a house-mother, she had to care for a family of fourteen children, five of whom were her own, and the others boarders. Such an active, useful, and in every respect blessed life, as Zeller's, could not fail to command the highest esteem of the whole population, both in the town and district; and at the time when the call of the Basle Society came to him he found himself surrounded by a multitude of friends, of all classes of society, who vied with one another to show the boundless admiration, affection, and gratitude which they felt towards him and his excellent partner.

Now the situation of director of a Poor school at Beuggen, supported only by voluntary contributions, secluded almost entirely from society, and confined within the narrow sphere of a family of neglected children and uneducated young men, when contrasted with Mr. Zeller's position at Zofingen, must have appeared most absurd and ridiculous in the eyes of mere worldly men. Perhaps, not one person in a thousand would have even taken the subject into consideration. Nor could Mr. Zeller have been blamed, if he had refused it. By accepting the call, he would rest the future welfare of his family on a basis which seemed very uncertain, humanly

speaking. He would also withdraw his talents and influence from a sphere of labour in which they had hitherto proved a source of extensive blessing. Indeed, no sooner was it known that he had received the invitation than the whole town was astir. The whole of the school teachers of the place came in solemn procession to the town-council to request its interference. Two members of the public school board were appointed to entreat Mr. Zeller, in the name of the town-council, to decline the call, the acceptance of which would be considered as a great calamity to the town. Numerous friends, young and old, rich and poor, in town and country, poured day after day into his house, and overwhelmed him with the entreaties, and sometimes even with the menaces of alarmed affection. He would be a fool, he was assured, if he would for one moment take the subject into consideration. He would undoubtedly be acting in opposition to the will of God, in leaving such a beautiful place, such a good income, so many friends, relatives, and pupils, in order to bury himself in a Poor school, situated in a remote corner of the world, destitute of any regular source of income, unsupported by the State, and depending only upon the sympathy of a few individuals, who at any moment might change their mind, and drop the whole concern. Suppose that were the case, where then was he to go with his wife and family? Could it be wise, could it be God's will, thus to throw away the benefits which Providence had so abundantly bestowed upon him, and to change his prosperity for poverty?

Only a faith like Mr. Zeller's, that shrinks from

nothing, could stand the shock of such assaults, prompted as they were by love and friendship. People who weigh everything in the scale of profit and loss, cannot understand how such a decision could proceed from a wise and prudent man. Nor is it intelligible even to those, who, though taking higher ground than that of mere financial calculation, yet know no other gauge for their duty than what appears to them to be the most expedient for the moment. Mr. Zeller's conduct can only be rightly understood and appreciated by those who know what it is to act upon principle.

After he came to Zofingen he was a regular attendant on public worship, and a faithful observer of family worship; he was considered to be a decidedly Christian man; he was himself a teacher of the orthodox doctrines of the Gospel; he was the centre and soul of an extensive sphere of usefulness, and the cause of the conversion of many an erring fellow-sinner. Yet, notwithstanding all these things, he felt inwardly unhappy and dissatisfied. He felt he lacked something; but what that was he was unable to tell. In this state of mind he fell in with a poor man, a mechanic, a man who could neither read nor write, but in whom he observed a profound knowledge of the truths of God, a purity of heart, an amiable simplicity of faith, such as far surpassed his conceptions. A close friendship sprung up between him and this good man. He soon perceived the cause of the difference between them. The unlearned joiner would now be often found in Zeller's study, engaged in studying the Scriptures, and in prayer. The unlearned man was the teacher, and the learned one his pupil. Nor was

this instruction in vain. He soon saw clearly that his conversation with his friend Spittler behind the Münster-Kirche was no mere accident. He felt that, without the slightest effort on his part, the call for effort came straight to him, and to nobody else.

So he accepted the call with a joyful heart, and when asked by his friends what the capital was with which the Institution was to be founded, he pointed them to four Texts of Scripture, which he called his school-fund. They were : -

1 Timothy ii. 4. God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

Mark xvi. 15, and Matt. xxviii. 20. Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

Luke xviii. 16. Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.

Matthew xviii. 5. Whoso shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me.

He never repented the step. When an old man he wrote : "Of the fifty-seven years which I have lived as a teacher, the thirty-seven which I have spent at Beuggen have been the happiest."

IV.

Object and Organisation of the Beuggen School

THUS the house-father for the new establishment was found; and so also was the house-mother. The professor's widow, already mentioned, Mrs. Fäsch, resolved to devote all her life and strength to this work,—to descend from her high station in society, and take her humble place as a mother among the children of the poor. Nor was she a novice in this kind of labour. For some time past she had been accustomed to assemble a number of poor children at her country seat, to train them for a useful life on earth, and a happy one in heaven. On the 1st of April, 1820, she left her charming grounds at Riehen never to return again, and entered the solitary castle of Beuggen, which had now been made habitable. Seventeen days after, Mr. Zeller arrived with his family. Their first night was spent in a room where the plague had raged most. Here he threw himself on his knees by the side of his wife, thanked God with tears for His faithful and wonderful leading, and prayed that He might turn this place, once the abode of misery and death, into a house of life, peace, and joy, to many lost and wandering souls.

The society resolved to commence operations with ten young men, and from twenty to thirty children, all of whom were already chosen. School instruction was begun on the 15th of May. The pupils were of all ages, from the young man of thirty to the child of six; and of

all descriptions—able and stupid, kind and cross, cheerful and desponding, well instructed and altogether ignorant, clean and dirty, grateful and insensible. It took some time to examine them so as to be able to classify them. They were then divided into two schools, the upper one for the pupil-teachers and the elder boys, and the lower one for the children. Meanwhile Mrs. Fäsch had taken measures lest her numerous and increasing household should be destitute of furniture. She had opened a large room in her house at Basle for storing gifts that might be sent in, especially for articles of furniture. Gradually a good collection was gathered, but numerous articles were still wanting. Then Mr. Spittler stepped in with his inventive genius. He made a little book of blank leaves, with headings written on the top of each page, such as *Parlour furniture*, *Kitchen utensils*, *Earthenware*, etc. He sent this little beggar from house to house, and each person wrote down the name of the article which he was willing to give. Thus every subscriber could see what had been given already, and what was still wanting, and many a one was thus reminded of gifts which perhaps he would never otherwise have thought of. In many houses the little book was sought for a second time, and thus the good house-mother of Beuggen Castle found herself in due time provided with all the implements that were required for carrying on her extensive household. Nor was Mr. Zeller overlooked in his capacity of schoolmaster. There was a page in the book set apart for school articles, and it was soon sufficiently filled to meet the wants of that important department.

The pupil-teachers received their school instruction in



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the forenoon, and their afternoon was spent in farming, gardening, and handicrafts; while the children who had spent their forenoon in labours of the same kind were taught at school. Mr. Zeller wanted the young men to accustom themselves to the most humble employments, and sometimes even to hard work. They were thus ever reminded that they were destined to be schoolmasters of poor children, perhaps in the most miserable hamlets of remote districts, where they were to be poor with the poor, living upon small salaries, and obliged to earn part of their livelihood with their own hands; and where, perhaps, they might have to thatch the roofs of their cottages, repair their furniture, dig their potatoes, and mend their coats. Thus at the outset they were inspired with a spirit of humility.

Mr. Zeller soon found it necessary to introduce a strict system of probation, sometimes for an indefinite time, as he had fallen into the mistake of accepting young men too quickly. His motto was, "Better no schoolmaster at all than a bad one." For providing the poor people with bad teachers no establishment was required. But if he could only bless a few hamlets with well trained, able, and truly Christian schoolmasters, he thought it would be worth all the trouble and sacrifice he was willing to undergo.

The working of the establishment, as organised by Mr. Zeller, was characterised by activity, order, and a thoroughly Christian spirit. Perhaps it will not be out of place here to give a description of the proceedings of one day, copied from one of Mr. Zeller's first reports. It will give the reader at the same time an idea of the style of

writing by which that highly-gifted and simple-hearted man made himself so popular :—

"At five o'clock in the morning a hymn, sung by some pupil-teachers, awakes the whole household. Then the fifteen bedrooms are all astir. Ninety human beings rise, and ninety beds are made. A short prayer is offered up in each bedroom, and each is ventilated and cleaned. The washing takes place in divisions at the fountain in the yard.

"Precisely at six the bell rings for breakfast for the pupil-teachers and the children. It consists of warm soup. Half an hour later the bell rings the servants of the house to their breakfast. If the weather be fine, the elder and stronger boys go with their overseer into the garden to work till seven. The lesser boys and girls, divided into two rooms, remain under the care of a teacher and learn their lessons, or write, read, draw, and prepare themselves for school.

"At seven the bell calls the whole household—work-people, pupil-teachers, children, and servants—into the large schoolroom for family worship. We sing a few verses; we offer up a prayer to our common Father and Lord. Then we read a portion of Scripture, from the Old and New Testaments on alternate days. Sometimes opportunity is given for confidential conversation; other times for a more regular address. With a verse of a hymn and the benediction we disperse each to his work.

"At eight, our overseer of the work collects twenty-five boys, and, having distributed the work among them, he goes with them to the garden or the field, where they labour till dinner-time. They plant, sow, hoe, chop, dig,

manure, weed, pick up stones, clean the roads, and thus cultivate the land in the sweat of their brow. Most of the boys like work. They do it with joy, and make evident progress in aptitude, adroitness, and skill.

"At the same hour, viz., eight o'clock, the two female teachers assemble the band of girls in the workroom, and form them into three circles for sewing, knitting, and spinning. Here they labour to meet the wants of the household by mending, and darning, and cutting, and sewing, and preparing the material of which our simple clothing is to be made. Meanwhile other girls carry water. and perform various domestic labours. During the work the girls sing their work tune, or a conversation is entered into about the portion of Scripture that was read at prayers, or a story is told, or every one works away in stillness.

"Meanwhile the house-mother goes to and fro, up and down the stairs, from roof to cellar, and from the kitchen into the garden and the washhouse, and looks after the business of the great household. Thus matters go on till dinner-time.

"Whilst everybody is engaged in the garden, the field, and the house, the house-father assembles the pupil-teachers and the elder boys in the new schoolroom to teach them. In one class the German grammar is taught, while in the other the pupils are engaged in writing. Then arithmetic is practised, either mentally in five or six circles, or with the aid of slates in three classes. Further, the method of country school teaching is taught and discussed; or the doctrine of the kingdom of God is treated of; or spelling exercises are held in one class,

and the organ played in the other. Finally, geography is taught, or singing is practised, either in united or separate choirs, during which the written exercises are perused and corrected.

"At last, a quarter before twelve the bell rings for dinner, and the forenoon soon draws to an end. This meal is preceded by a hymn. The guests, large and small, are placed at four oblong tables. A verse is sung to return thanks after dinner. Then the pupil-teachers go with the elder boys to the workshops, to the field, or to the garden till four o'clock. The little children, boys and girls, have an hour for playing in the spacious yard, under the supervision of a pupil-teacher.

"At one, my friend, Mr. Barner, rings the bell, and, accompanied by five pupil-teachers, who act as monitors, and are changed each month, he proceeds to the schoolroom, where all the little folks are assembled. The teaching is opened with a hymn or a prayer. Mr. Barner tells them a story from the Bible, or some good book. Or the texts and hymns which were learnt by heart are said in eight circles, or grammar is taught, or a tune is dictated and written in the books. This is the commencement of the teaching of the children. Then writing is practised on slates. The bigger children write letters or exercises which are dictated to them; the lesser ones copy the diagrams that are suspended on the wall. They also exercise themselves in writing with ink from copies. Then arithmetic is taught. Finally, the children are exercised in reading, each in their turn: the younger ones from reading tables; the elder ones read, in a separate room, the Book of Sirach.

"At four, the bell rings for the *Abendbrodt* (afternoon lunch). Led by their teacher, the children walk, to the singing of a hymn, from the school to the dining-room, and stand in order. After the hymn, each one receives a piece of bread, often with some fresh or dried fruit. The pupil-teachers receive bread, with must or milk.

"At five, the bell rings again for labour, which lasts till seven.

"At six, those children who, as catechumens, are being prepared for their first participation of the Lord's Supper, are called into the parlour of the house-father, and receive, in a private class, but often in the presence of some of the adult inmates of the house, preparatory Biblical instruction. On Wednesdays this hour is devoted to a Scripture reading meeting for the whole household.

"At seven, the bell rings for the supper of the children. The house-father walks with the catechumens to the dining-room. While passing the various work-rooms, the procession gradually swells by the addition of the other children. After a short prayer pronounced by the house-father, the children partake of their broth, a verse is sung, and they go to their bedrooms, under the charge of the bedroom superintendents. Each superintendent prays with his children, who, tired with the day's work, soon get into their welcome beds.

"At eight, the adult members of the household partake of supper. After supper, the house-father or his assistant reads a portion of ancient Church history, or of more recent intelligence concerning the progress of the kingdom of God. Sometimes also a portion of same

interesting book is read. During the reading the hearers, seated round the table, are engaged in various kinds of domestic labour.

"After nine, the members of the family are once more assembled in the large schoolroom, where the day is closed by a short word of edification and by prayer.

"Such is the routine of one day amongst us. Where there is so much labour day after day, without the usual recreation which other families may indulge in,—where, from five in the morning till half-past nine in the evening, there is continuous work, the Word of God is like a refreshing and cooling draught in hot summer weather, or a fertilising shower on a parched field, or a light on one's path. And where there are so many people together, that Word is an indispensable instructor. I am sure our dear friends cordially wish us all these mercies, and have no doubt that we, from experience, know what they are."

So much for the order of the day as it was introduced by Mr. Zeller forty years ago, and is observed till the present time at the Beuggen establishment. Certainly time is not passed there in idleness. What must, above all, strike the visitor, is the humble simplicity that pervades the whole organisation. There is not the slightest attempt at show. Nothing but what poor children should learn to aim at is put before them. Their education is confined to what they will need in the humble sphere of life which Providence has destined them for. Perhaps, in the opinion of some, a little more time might be allowed for play. But it is questionable whether it would be wise to accustom children who will have to

work hard in later life to much recreation, especially as it certainly is not required for health's sake, since they have plenty of bodily exercise in their garden and field labour. Their blooming countenances, and happy, merry looks, tell that their day's work itself is their pastime.

V

A Glance at the History of the School

THE second year of the Establishment's existence, though gratifying as to its results, was marred by a sad loss: the death of the excellent house-mother, Mrs. Fasch. The place of this good and noble woman was taken by Mr. Zeller's wife, who henceforth extended her maternal care, hitherto bestowed exclusively upon her own family, to the whole household; and during a period of thirty-two years she has proved herself a worthy successor of Mrs. Fäsch.

Though, on the whole, the forty years during which Mr. Zeller conducted the Establishment were years of prosperity and happiness, yet he had his share of this life's thistles and briers, and sometimes it was a hard task to drink the cup that was put before him. Sometimes the purse of the Establishment was all but empty; and it seemed as if the dark picture of Mr. Zeller's future lot which his friends at Zofingen had put before him was

about to be realised. One year the number of individuals who paid the board of children was so small that more than half of them were unpaid for; and out of the twenty-two pupil-teachers who were in the house, only two were paid for. Thus nearly two-thirds of this numerous household were entirely on the funds of the Establishment. Now, Mr. Zeller never went out to collect money; nor did he send anybody in his place. In the forty annual Reports which he wrote there is not even one line in which he asks the public for gifts. Such a thing as a list of regular annual subscribers he had not. A capital fund at the credit of the Establishment was not to be found in any bank. It is true the Basle Committee greatly contributed towards keeping up the sympathy of Christian friends; but not one of its members had pledged himself to pay a deficit; and that there would be a tremendous deficit this year was, humanly speaking, all but certain. "We, too," Mr. Zeller writes on this occasion, "were for some time in anxiety. Misgivings about God's careful love would darken our hearts. But we were served aright, and put to shame; for unexpected gifts, contributions in kind, large and small donations, poured in so abundantly that we closed the year without owing anything to anybody, except love and gratitude. Among these gifts of love were the mites of the widows, the weekly savings of Christian industry, and the farthings of the sympathising poor, as well as the greater donations of liberal wealth. One benefactress sent us quite unexpectedly 1000 francs; a female friend left her gold chain in our box; and another benefactor presented us with two superb milk cows."

Financial difficulties are like the sting of the mosquito. They are painful at the time, but are soon forgotten. But the sting of slander goes deeper. It is like that of the viper, poisoning the blood, and aiming at the life itself. Even a man so simple, so inoffensive, as Mr. Zeller, could not escape its malicious assaults. One day in the year 1830 the *Appenzeller Zeitung* published an offensive article against the Beuggen Establishment. It was copied by other papers, both German and Swiss, and gave rise to a series of calumnies and infamous reports which put the Establishment in such an equivocal light that the Government deemed it to be its duty to step in and place it under strict surveillance. Conscious of his innocence, Mr. Zeller treated all this very lightly, leaving truth to plead its own cause. Instead of opening a battery of counter-articles, he only expressed his joy "at the kind trouble" which the Government was henceforth to take, of inquiring into the state and proceedings of the Establishment, and thus putting the minds of the public at rest.

These and similar trials and difficulties, which reminded Mr. Zeller of the truth that to love is to suffer, were, on the other hand, fully compensated for by the heart-rejoicing experiences of the blessed effect of his good work. During the long period of his directorship the Establishment always contained from 105 to 115 individuals, of whom there were many who under his truly paternal, tender, and cautious, yet firm and serious, guidance, found the way from death to life; and there were none, so far as is known, who did not at least become better members of society, if not of the Church.

Zeller does not say much in his Reports about the results of his labour on the hearts and conduct of his pupils. In this respect he was like his friend Pestalozzi, who dreaded publicity, and ascribed most of his errors to his having too many panegyrists. Still grateful joy impels him now and then to tell his readers that some of the boys who are sent out are raised to higher situations, owing to their good conduct; that one of the girls has been appointed house-mother to an Establishment for the poor; that other girls have married respectable husbands; that others, who, after they left the house, had taken to a disgraceful life, unexpectedly wrote him to express their grief and contrition, and to ask his pardon. The tone of contentment, of enjoyment, of gratitude, in which he from the first to the last page of his forty Reports speaks of his work and pupils; the undaunted enthusiasm with which he, from year to year, continues to carry on his arduous labours, and the urgency with which he on every occasion presses the establishment of as many Institutions for poor children as can be founded,—all this, together with the unanimous eulogy of the whole band of German and Swiss Christian philanthropists, shows that his labours must have been crowned with unquestionable success. This may, at least, be said of his work among the pupil-teachers: that they were spread through the whole of the German population of Europe, from Cologne to the Crimea, where, on the shores of the Black Sea, many a poor German and Swiss colony was living in ignorance and misery.

The good reputation which the Beuggen School pos-

sessed induced several municipalities and consistories to request Mr. Zeller to receive young convicts. Now, though a child of convict parents was sometimes taken into the Establishment, yet the Committee, after serious consideration of the matter, did not feel at liberty to admit children who had been before the magistrates. Want of fit accommodation was given as the chief ground of this refusal; and Establishments expressly organised for young malefactors, such as that of Mr. Kopf, at Berlin, and of Wichern, near Hamburg, were pointed out as more suitable for the purpose. Still it appears to me that the Committee must also have been actuated by a perception of the dangers to which the Establishment would be exposed, if its youthful inmates were brought into close contact with young criminals. The Beuggen School might have suffered the same calamity which came upon General Van den Bosch's Dutch Agricultural Colony for the Poor, when it agreed to receive the paupers and beggars who were sentenced by the police courts, and boarded out by the Government. The number of its subscribers in one year dwindled down from 21,000 to 4000; and the institution got into such disrepute, that, entirely abandoned by the people, it was only saved from utter ruin by enormous grants from the Government. There is a sharp line of demarcation that distinguishes private transgression and public crime. It would be useless to try to efface that line; nor would it be wise. Society must have a boundary drawn, beyond which evil may not go without incurring the penalty of public contempt and shame. This limit is essential to the existence of an orderly commonwealth. To permit individuals who

have gone beyond that line freely and publicly to mix with those who have not yet proceeded so far, is, in my opinion, to give a dangerous blow to the foundation of social wellbeing. It may be desirable and necessary, of course, that convicts, after having served out their sentence, should return to social life; but this should be effected through some unnoticed channel, so that they may re-enter society in the form of unknown strangers, not stigmatised with the brand of public disgrace. And it is the noble task of Christian philanthropy to found institutions where those dirty waters may be filtered before they are allowed to flow again into the social river. But such institutions should be kept separate, lest the infectious deposit be carried into streams of purer water.

A glance at the programme of the Establishment, as laid down by Mr. Zeller at the commencement of its foundation, and carried out with faithful consistency during his lengthened leadership, shows that it was quite unsuitable as a reformatory for convicts. It contains ten articles, from which the following are extracted:—

1. Our Establishment shall not be an Institution merely for instruction, but a place for training (*Bildungs-Anstalt*) in the form of a family, living a real family life.

2. Nor is it intended to be an Establishment for mere civil or secular education; but a Christian school for training and instruction, on the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, of which Jesus Christ is the chief corner-stone.

3. It is not a compulsory but a voluntary Establishment, founded by voluntary love, supported by voluntary

contributions, conducted by voluntary persons, composed of voluntary human beings, destined for voluntary young men, who, stimulated by the free love of Jesus Christ, have resolved to devote themselves to His service among poor children.

4. It is not an Establishment for rich or well-to-do individuals, but for poor and indigent ones. Consequently the terms are fixed very low, 6¼ *Louis d'or* (about £5) for a child, and 12½ *Louis d'or* (about £10) for a pupil-teacher.

8. The curriculum of the pupil-teachers is fixed at three years. In the first year they learn with the first or uppermost class of the children's school. In the second year they continue learning in that way, but at the same time begin to teach some of the elder classes as assistant-teachers. In the third year they continue teaching, and receive at the same time a coherent methodical introduction into their future profession as teachers of poor schools.

10. Finally, the Establishment does not seek its own honour, profit, or comfort; but the honour of the great Redeemer, the profit of the Kingdom of God, and the comfort and redemption of the poor. Accordingly nobody will continue in it except such as are willing to suffer privation, to sacrifice themselves, to suffer and endure, and gladly to give up themselves to service in the vineyard of Jesus.

VI

Some Features of Mr Zeller's Character as a Christian Teacher

ONE of the main features in Mr. Zeller's character was his sincere piety, marked by a rare degree of humility. One need only read his Reports to be struck with the really touching frankness and simplicity of heart with which he every now and then speaks of his own faults and failures; and those who came into close contact with him assure us that as he appears in his writings, so he was in real life. "My friends," he would write, "all human works are defective, and marred by stumbling. I, alas! have to reproach myself with many faults and mistakes. Always we have to learn the true thing, *i.e.*, the meaning and will of the Lord, by doing our work better to-day than we did it yesterday; and by ourselves becoming better than we were before. When we are inspired by the desire of learning, and by the wish to mortify our own selves more and more, and honestly to serve the best, kindest, and most gracious of Masters, we always receive from His good hand more good than we, unworthy creatures as we are, are able to return to Him. But if we only come to Him with repentance, we *are* already received. The Lord resisteth the proud, but He giveth grace to the humble; yes, to the humble and contrite spirit. Oh, how often have I experienced that! May it strengthen and encourage my fellow-labourers! For we should have to wait too long were we to postpone serving the Lord till we commit no more sin. I could



CHRISTIAN HEINRICH ZELLER

fill a whole Annual Report with a list of faults and failures. Nor will I promise that I shall never tell them. An honest account of our defects and mistakes might, perhaps, be the most instructive part of a Report. But this time we will rejoice and be glad, for we too have obtained mercy," etc.

Even in his ripe age, when sixty-three, he refused not to accept a rather sharp criticism of his Establishment from a young acquaintance as "the smiting of a friend." "At Beuggen," this critic said to him, "word and action are often in contradiction. Superficial broadness there is often called profoundness. People there are anxious about forms before they have the thing. They talk much about the true method of proceeding, but proceed meanwhile very unmethodically." "Here," Mr. Zeller says, "our friend interrupted his discourse with an *et cetera.* I have only to say that, perhaps, much might have been added which would have struck our consciences harder still. As far as I am concerned, however, I am sincerely resolved to try more and more to cure these evils. But faults with which one has grown sixty-three years old do not yield except through a constant renewing of the mind."

Mr. Zeller used to bear up under attack and invective with the greatest tranquillity. When called a fanatic or a pietist, he would say, with a smile, "It is not at all uncommon in botany to see plants wrongly classified." He even acknowledged the good intentions of some of his antagonists. He had always an answer ready. "Is it possible to be too pious? Is it possible to be too faithful to God and His Word? I think not. In this

respect we have not to regret that we are doing too much, but too little. It is true, experience teaches us that no human being, no Establishment, no Church can be guaranteed against the most deplorable decay, the most pernicious falling off in religion; and we too have need to watch and pray. But after the most accurate examination, I cannot see that there is too much of Biblical teaching amongst us. For we know in what condition and from what quarters our children come to us; but we cannot possibly know whither they will be scattered abroad after having left our Institution. And it is our dearest concern, and our most holy duty, to take care that, with reference to the one thing needful, they be not neglected, but carefully taught from the Word of God."

Mr. Zeller's high estimation of the Bible and its influence upon the school proceeded from relevant causes. First, his experience of the insufficiency of Pestalozzi's principle caused him to look to the Bible as the only satisfactory corrective. Undoubtedly Pestalozzi's system of teaching and training was a great step between the unsubstantial and flippant teaching of the eighteenth century and the more solid, reasonable, and humane school teaching of the present time. The great love for the people, "the poor people," which characterised Pestalozzi's life and all his undertakings, however unsuccessful, could not but deeply impress such a heart as Zeller's, nor could he fail to admire the genius which knew so well how to open up the Book of Creation to the children, in order to impress them with true ideas of the real nature of things. But a genius, like Zeller's could not

fail to discover the defect that lay at the bottom of Pestalozzi's system. Pestalozzi wanted the children, as it were, continuously to bathe in the rivers of creation, but Zeller wanted them at the same time to bathe in the ocean of divine truth—the Scriptures. Nor was Pestalozzi opposed to this; he only lacked the required simplicity of sight to perceive how it could be effected. But he saw it realised at Beuggen, and he marvelled at it with joyful surprise. It was in July 1826 that the patriarch visited Zeller's Establishment. Upon entering the house, his way on both sides was lined by a row of children and pupil-teachers, who welcomed him with a hymn. Moved to tears, the venerable grey-headed man walked up the broad flight of stairs to the large schoolroom, and took his place at the teacher's desk. An oak wreath was presented to him, but he put it on the head of Zeller's little son, saying, in a voice almost stifled with tears, "Not to me! Not to me! This wreath becomes innocence!" He stayed four days at the Establishment, and inquired minutely into its organisation and the spirit in which it was conducted. And what was the impression made upon his mind? When walking through the House he constantly said to himself, as overwhelmed with surprise, "What a power! What a power!" It is also asserted that, after having seen Zeller's work, he said, "I wish I could begin my labours over again." This judgment of the grey-headed veteran in the noble army of educational philanthropists, whose whole life had been devoted to trying to reform society, was undoubtedly the highest panegyric that could be pronounced upon Zeller's work.

Another cause of Mr. Zeller's strong antipathy to all teaching and training which were not based upon Scripture, was his knowledge of the alarming condition of the great bulk of the popular schools, and of the godless spirit in which popular education was conducted by the great majority of the teachers of his time. "For thirty years," he wrote in 1831, "the youth in many both of our higher and lower schools have been defrauded of right teaching, and those who have committed that outrage upon them have been looked upon as the most distinguished teachers, and have been the best remunerated. The most insipid twaddle has been called moral and religious doctrine, and school-books, either with subtle omissions or impudent contradictions, have been introduced by the Government. Instruction in history, that record of Divine justice and human error, has been taken advantage of to stir up the national pride, and to disseminate the most pernicious maxims and most alluring sophisms. And, to crown this teaching by example, some teachers have even been found in the ranks of the rebels against both Church and State, whose benefits they had formerly enjoyed. Such are the effects and fruits of a godless education, and of an apostasy which destroys our domestic life, desecrates the Church, and makes the kingdoms shake to their foundations. And yet some laud the 'beautiful time in which we have the privilege of living!'"

Of course, the man who preached such doctrine was called a fanatic by men clothed in soft raiment. But where the world at large, and the schools for youth in particular, are in such a state, surely a man who holds up

the Bible as the only true weapon against imminent danger, must be looked upon as a noble hero, whose "fanaticism" is a blessing to his country. No wonder, indeed, that Mr. Zeller, after having himself given the example, left no opportunity untried to incite his friends to found Christian schools, and, above all, such establishments for poor children as his own. Many a page of his writings is filled with urgent exhortations to this. He describes in vivid colours the utter destitution and ignorance of the poor youth. He appeals to the consciences of preachers and teachers to induce them to train and support Christian young men as schoolmasters. He exults with enthusiasm when he hears that, in any part of the world, a reformatory, an asylum, a school for poor children has been established in a Christian spirit. He gives lists of them. He classifies them. He beseeches the Christian public to increase their number, and to support them liberally. Instant in season and out of season, he leaves his friends no rest till he sees them at work for the poor. It is calculated that not less than between forty and fifty establishments for the poor have been erected in Switzerland and Germany, on the model of the Beuggen School, in consequence of Zeller's incessant exhortations and appeals.

I am not able to give statistics of the income and expenditure of the Beuggen establishment. It is, so far as I know, the only charitable institution in the world supported by voluntary contributions which publishes no list of subscribers or balance-sheet. Nor has a balance-sheet ever been asked for during all the years of its existence. Mr. Zeller himself, and the twelve worthy

and venerable Basle gentlemen who formed his committee, were the balance-sheet. And so the establishment continues to this day, cordially supported by voluntary gifts from all quarters, while only a few know how much comes in or how much is wanted.

At the time of Zeller's death, the 593d child had just entered his establishment. On my visit to Beuggen in December, 1863, I found the list increased to 644. The number of pupil-teachers who had been trained amounted to 270.

The Rev. Mr. Reinhardt Zeller, the present director, who during his father's life was connected with the establishment as his assistant, continues the work in the same spirit in which it was conducted by his godly and venerable father. He is faithfully assisted by his brother, Mr. Nathaniel Zeller, who conducts the administrative department. Christian travellers, who may happen to be at Basle or its neighbourhood, should, by all means, try to spend a Sunday at Beuggen. The prayers, short and pithy, were simple enough to be the vehicles of children's thoughts, and sublime enough to carry up the minds of all the audience. The sermon, from Rom. xiii. 11–14, was as telling upon the heart as it was quaintly divided. Each of its three parts was headed by a preposition thus: *Up!* (ver. 11, Awake out of sleep); *Off!* (ver. 12, Cast *off* the works of darkness); *On!* (verses 12 and 14, Put *on* the armour of light; put *on* the Lord Jesus Christ). After the close of the service, the whole congregation rose and remained standing. Mr. Zeller, leaving his desk, took the two youngest girls by the hand and walked

out of the room, followed in orderly procession by the other children, to the singing of a hymn. This was a sight which it was impossible to witness without being deeply moved. Half an hour later I found the whole household assembled at dinner. More than a hundred individuals were seated at four long tables with an order and quietness which could only be expected in a well-trained family of ordinary size. The Grace was sung to a tune, which by its sweet melody and correct harmony prepared us thankfully to accept the bountiful gifts of a merciful Giver. There is a special table-hymn for each day of the week, but I think the Sunday one excels them all, both in the beauty of its tune and the homeliness of its words.

I could find only one table of statistics in Mr. Zeller's reports showing the condition of the children both in and out of the house at a certain period. It is in the report for 1843, when the institution had entered the twenty-fourth year of its existence. The total number of children admitted from the beginning of the establishment was at that time 335. Out of these there were :—

Married	40
Master Tradesmen, and supporting themselves honestly	54
Servants and apprentices	77
Behaving badly	23
Dead	23
Little or nothing known of	52
Still in the house	66

Now, not taking into account the 66 who were still in the house and the 23 who had died, we find that out of the remainder, 171 were known as having been suc-

cessfully redeemed for human society, which is nearly 70 per cent. On the other hand, only 23, *i.e.*, 10 per cent., had turned out failures, and the remaining 20 per cent. were unknown. This really shows such a favourable proportion as few establishments can boast of.

As to those who had turned out well, Mr. Zeller remarks that twenty-three of them had become instruments in the hands of Providence of saving other poor neglected children. Some of them were house-fathers or house-mothers of establishments for poor children, or teachers in schools for the poor.

THE DEACON HOUSE AT DUISBURG ON THE RHINE.



I

Introductory

THE object of the *Inner Mission* is to raise, to train, and to organise a band of Christian labourers, both males and females, who will stand by the side of ministers, elders, and deacons, and assist them in carrying the saving power of the Gospel to quarters which lie somewhat beyond the reach of the regular office-bearers of the Church. Thus Father Zeller established his school at Beuggen for the training of Schoolmasters for poor children. Thus Wichern opened his Rauhe Haus, and Fliedner his Deaconess-Establishment at Kaiserswerth; and thus the Pastoral-Aid Establishment at Duisburg was founded, of which I now mean to give an account.

It is an Institution for training Christian young men as *Deacons*, using the word in the same sense in which Protestant Sisters of Charity are called *Deaconesses*. And who but Pastor Fliedner could be its founder?

His deaconesses had just begun to spread the blessing of their work of love throughout the Church, and to prove practically that no evil can be too great for judiciously-directed Christian labour to overcome. With the power of Christian love they united the tenderness of the female mind. But another band of labourers was required who would unite with it the energy of manly strength. A vast sphere of labour was only accessible to strong young men, who, as good soldiers of Christ, could endure hardships, bear the fatigues of long journeys, deal with ruffians and vagabonds, live with criminals in prison, and, irrespective of weather and climate, visit the lost and the cast away, even in the most dangerous places where they had their abode.

The pretty town of Duisburg, which, about half-an-hour's ride by rail from Düsseldorf, stands on the banks of the Rhine, seemed to be the best spot where such an Establishment could be founded. That town is well known in the history of the Protestant Church as a centre and stronghold of religious life in Rhenish Prussia. Perhaps its geographical situation, just at the point where the three principal districts of Rhenish Prussia—Berg, Mark, and Cleve—meet, may have contributed towards giving it that important position among the Christian Churches of the Rhine; but even a situation ten times more favourable would have failed to raise the town to its present rank in the estimation of German Christians. No, it is mainly indebted for this to a succession, for upwards of a century, of pious and evangelical Gospel preachers, such as Henke in former, and Krummacher in latter days.

It was as early as the year 1843 that Pastor Fliedner conceived the plan of founding a Deacon-house here. A friendly lady at Bremen assisted him in the enterprise. She declared herself ready to advance a sum of 6000 thalers (£900) for the purchase of a house. One was accordingly bought in a central, though not conspicuous, spot, in the town, and opened with solemn devotion on the 31st of October (1844), the day on which Continental Protestants are accustomed annually to commemorate the breaking of the light of the Reformation through the mists of ignorance and superstition.

The name given to the house was *Pastoral-Gehülfen-Anstalt* (Pastoral-Aid Establishment). Its object was expressed in the address with which Pastor Fliedner opened it. It was to be for the purpose of training assistants to the office-bearers of the Church in their pastoral work; and these were to be of two kinds, viz.: 1. Lay-assistants, or assistant-deacons; 2. clerical-assistants. It was intended that the first class should be taken chiefly from the poorer ranks of life, and that they should devote themselves to the care of the sick, the needy, the neglected, and the criminal. The clerical assistants were to be licensed candidates for the holy ministry, who, after having left the university, and before taking orders, could here prepare themselves practically for their future pastoral labours. This branch, however, though very important in itself, was to be only a subordinate part of the Establishment's work. Its chief object was the training of the lay-assistants, who, for brevity's sake, were called simply *Deacons*. Pastor Fliedner commenced the enterprise in his own name.

It was never, of course, his intention to be its director, as he had his hands full with the work at Kaiserswerth. But it did not require much superintendence for the first few months, as five young men were the sole inmates. One of these was appointed house-father, and a deaconess came from Kaiserswerth to take the management of the little household. Then a few fatherless and friendless boys were taken in to begin work with. Two of the young men, meanwhile, were sent to Kaiserswerth to learn the art of tending the sick. There were no funds as yet; but Fliedner was sure that God would not allow the good work to fail, as it was commenced in His name, and for the good of the lost.

A head was now required for the infant Establishment. It was requisite that he should not only be a friend of the poor, and acquainted with the work of the Inner Mission, but also a scholar, and a good theologian, as he would have to instruct the candidates. Such a man was found in Mr. Brandt, who for four years had been chief assistant (*Oberhelfer*) at Wichern's Rauhe Haus. The situation of Inspector of an Institution like that of Duisburg could not but be attractive to a man who knew from experience what fearful injury the cancer of pauperism was causing to society, and how great need there was of able and faithful men to stay its progress. Mr. Brandt and his excellent wife entered the Duisburg Establishment in October, 1845, when it had just finished its first year of existence. During that period the seed sown by Pastor Fliedner had sprung up into a little tree. The number of the deacons had increased to sixteen; that of the children to fifteen. So Mr. Brandt found at once an

excellent sphere of labour to begin with. Some of the deacons occupied themselves with teaching; others visited the poor both in town and country; others sold Bibles, as colporteurs, and thus tried to obtain an introduction into families. Where there was a sick one the deacon would sit down by the invalid's bedside, and smooth his pillow or give him his medicine, at the same time addressing him in words of kindness and consolation, and sometimes remaining with him both day and night. This work could not but send forth a good report amongst men. The Duisburg Establishment soon gained the hearts and confidence of the public. Gifts, both in money and kind, began to pour in abundantly from all parts. The first year of Mr Brandt's administration closed with £205 in donations, £40 in subscriptions, and an immense quantity of gifts in kind. This was nearly sufficient to cover the expenditure of the year. The books closed with a deficit of only £21.

As the deacons were mostly artisans, they taught the boys their various trades; but a special educational teacher was appointed who could train the deacons to act as schoolmasters for poor children; for it was the object of the Establishment to fit the young men for *every* branch of Home and Inner Mission work, whether it were nursing the sick, superintending the prisoner, or teaching the ignorant and the neglected. It was intended, in short, that the Duisburg Institution should be able to supply labourers for every department of the work of charity and evangelization among the poor.

The Establishment was also intended to be a blessing to young men. From this numerous and interesting

class the deacons had to be chosen; but how could this be done if the young men were not known? And how could they offer themselves if they were unacquainted with the object of the Establishment? Mr. Brandt thus perceived the desirableness of making the Establishment known to such persons. One day, in 1846, while journeying to the neighbouring town of Mülheim, on the Ruhr, he fell in with an apprentice tailor, who was on his way to the market. The rain began to fall in heavy showers, so that they had to take shelter in a poor cottage at the side of the road. Here Mr. Brandt took his Bible out of his pocket, and, after having read a chapter, addressed the inmates of the cottage and the young tailor, about the one thing needful. His word went home to the young man's heart. An invitation to come to the Establishment, and to make the acquaintance of the deacons who inhabited it, was gladly accepted. This was the commencement of a *Christian Young Men's Association*, which henceforth assembled in one of the rooms of the Establishment. The number of its members soon increased to thirty, who, in the company of the deacons, spent their evenings in agreeable and useful conversation; and who, instead of frequenting the public-house on Sunday evenings, as they were wont to do, now attended the Scripture-reading meeting, which the Inspector of the Establishment held with his family.

By these proceedings the Establishment grew in the estimation of the public. The Government granted free postage to all letters and parcels sent to or from the Institution; and afterwards allowed annual collections be made for it in all the parishes of Rhenish Prussia

and Westphalia. Charitable societies and corporations began to seek the assistance of the deacons for their work among the poor and the sick. One of the deacons was called to be a nurse at the German hospital in Rome; another left for London for a like purpose. The Reformed Calvinistic Church at Gemarke, near Elberfeld, engaged a third brother as "church deacon," *i.e.*, as a salaried assistant of the deacons of the church. A fourth brother was appointed by the Temperance Society at Barmen as its agent. Thus the Establishment, while yielding such blessed fruits, struck deep roots into the national life. It was evident that this Institution would be a real blessing, not only to the people of Prussia, but to the German nation at large.

Many of the deacons were farmers and gardeners by profession; and agricultural labour being an excellent occupation for the boys, pieces of arable land, situated in the vicinity of the town, were bought or hired. This afforded an opportunity to the deacons for exercising themselves in teaching the children the art of husbandry.

In the sick-nursing department, there was, however, an important blank. An hospital was urgently needed, where the deacons, under the superintendence of an able medical man, could be taught to assist in dressing wounds or in operations, and to prepare or administer medicines in the proper way. Favourable circumstances encouraged the building of such an establishment. Soon a three-storied hospital rose in the rear of the Deacon-house, separated from it, however, by a spacious garden, so as to render infection impossible.

The Institution had now reached such dimensions that

the assistance of a committee was required. Pastor Fliedner committed the supervision of the work to a board of twenty-four members, of which he himself was president. To avoid any appearance whatever of a separatistic tendency, this committee was placed in the closest possible connexion with the provincial Synods of the Rhine province and Westphalia. The presidents of these Synods are *ex officio* members of the committee; and of the twenty-four members of whom it is composed, not less than sixteen belong to the clergy of the two provinces.

While the Institution was thus progressing it was threatened with a great injury in the loss of its valuable Inspector. Mr. Brandt had accepted a call to be a clergyman at Essen; from whence, a few years later, he was called to Amsterdam, the place of his present residence. Under the providential leading of the Saviour of the lost, however, Pastor Fliedner had become acquainted with a young Candidat, Mr. R. Engelbert, who for some years previously had proved an able and zealous labourer in home mission work, and who accepted the call to be Mr. Brandt's successor with enthusiasm. In his early youth he had shown great sympathy in the work of improving and raising the artisan class, to which he belonged by birth. His father was a tailor at Barmen; and he brought up his son to his own trade. But young Engelbert showed such talents at school, that the teacher strongly advised his father to prepare him either for the bar or the pulpit. This was not, however, in accordance with the taste of the young man, who wished rather to remain a tailor, and in that capacity try to raise the

artisan class by his example and influence. But the advice of the teacher, and the desire of the father, prevailed over the inclination of the son. He attended the gymnasium, and afterwards went to the University of Bonn to study theology. At that time he had a decided inclination towards Rationalism. The whole Wupper valley, where he had spent his childhood and early youth, was notorious throughout Germany for the staunch attachment of its inhabitants to the orthodox creed. But in many quarters that orthodoxy had degenerated into a passive, and sometimes even immoral pietism. This had inspired the young student with an aversion to orthodoxy, which he considered as the cause of those excesses. It is not wonderful, then, that he entered the University of Bonn with a prejudice against the theology which was then taught by Nitzsch and Sack. He accordingly repaired to Halle, where he hoped to meet with a teacher more congenial to his own ideas. Tholuck, who taught there, was certainly not less orthodox than Nitzsch; but he seemed to be possessed of the gift of reaching the understandings of the young men by first bringing the truth home to their hearts. Mr. Engelbert here learnt to distinguish between a mere formal orthodoxy and a real heart belief, and to observe the Scriptural foundation upon which the latter is based, as well as its tendency towards quickening the believer with love and joy. He also became acquainted here with those small societies of well-principled students which, by means of friendly intercourse, tried to inspire themselves and others with Christian life. This was a sort of home mission in which Engelbert now took a hearty delight. He then returned to Bonn, now fully understanding the

meaning of Nitzsch's theology. Under the influence of that great and learned man he was entirely gained to the heart-quickening truths of the Gospel; and it became henceforth his earnest desire to carry these truths to the hearts of the young, and especially to the uneducated and ignorant. He became a tutor in an excellent Christian family at Barmen, where he found ample opportunity for exercising himself in the art of teaching and training. Here he made the acquaintance of Pastor Fliedner, who used frequently to visit the family. He afterwards accepted a call to be assistant to a clergyman at Herdecke, the centre of a populous manufacturing district of Rhenish Prussia. In this place he found full scope for his missionary enterprises. A remarkable revival had just then begun among the people. Mr. Engelbert held Scripture readings and prayer meetings nearly every evening of the week, which were attended by crowds. The blessing which God vouchsafed to this work was most remarkable. Notorious drunkards and profligates were converted. Families which were known to be bitterly hostile to the Gospel were overcome by the power of the Word, and became disciples of Christ. Mr. Engelbert was so struck with all he witnessed that he resolved to devote himself entirely to Home Mission work. He had just prepared himself for a journey to Wichern's Rauhe Haus, where he hoped to fit himself for his new career, when, in 1847, in his twenty-seventh year, he was invited to become Inspector of the Deaconhouse at Duisburg. He could not doubt that the call was from God. He therefore accepted it with joy; and to this day he is the happy and prosperous Director of the Establishment.

II.

Organisation and Spirit of the Establishment

When Mr. Engelbert entered on his duties he found such an amount of work awaiting him, that all the energy and talents of both himself and his wife were required. The number of the "brethren" or deacons had increased to twenty-nine; that of the boys to twenty-four. Two candidates had also been admitted to receive instruction in the branch of practical theology which belongs to the sphere of the Inner Mission. And, in addition to all this, the hospital was just finished, and already gave shelter to three invalids, whose number would no doubt soon be increased from the bands of navvies who laboured at the railroads and river-works in the neighbourhood. It was a fine building, capable of accommodating from fifty to sixty patients in twelve sick rooms and three large saloons. It also contained dwelling-rooms for the house-father, apartments for the nurses and the servants, a spacious kitchen, a bath-room, and an apothecary's shop. In the course of a few years, however, it proved far too small, for nearly as many invalids had to be refused from want of space as were admitted. This circumstance made the committee welcome an opportunity, which occurred in 1862, of purchasing premises and grounds adjacent to the Establishment's property. A new hospital was founded on this site, but it was not finished when I visited the place in 1863. What a blessing this hospital must be to the town, which has no hospital of its own,

and to the surrounding district, may be gathered from the fact, that every year from 250 to 300 invalids are nursed and provided with medical treatment under the superintendence of a doctor specially engaged for the house. The terms are one shilling per day, which covers everything except extraordinary expenses for clothes, artificial apparatus, crutches, *et cetera*. A subscription of eighteen pence a quarter, or six shillings a year, secures gratuitous medical treatment and nursing during a period of three months. The number of patients in 1862 was 297, of whom 78 were Roman Catholics—all denominations being received. The diseases treated were, nervous fever, 11; ague, 16; consumption, 11; gastric fever, 20; itch, 42; syphilis, 28, *et cetera*. A complete surgical apparatus for the greater operations is provided by the Government. Male patients only are received; and cases of epilepsy, insanity, and chronic diseases are excluded.

Here the brethren have an opportunity of becoming acquainted with man's misery in its worst forms, and of learning how to assuage it by that tender self-denying love, which knows how to press sweet drops into the bitter cup of suffering.

It is not to be marvelled at that Christian young men, trained in this way, are eagerly sought for. Both private families and hospitals apply for their valuable services. For a shilling a day such a deacon becomes your sick-room friend both by day and night. If you are too poor to pay, he serves you for Christ's sake. If you are able to pay more than one shilling, you may make a present, not to him, but to the Establishment Nor will he leave

you sooner than is proper. He is prepared to stay with you two or three months if necessary. On an average, from sixteen to twenty of the brethren are thus engaged in private families in the course of a year. In 1862, seventeen were engaged in forty-nine cases of disease. The number of days on which they served was 1557; so that, on an average, from four to five brethren were constantly employed in private nursing. Another band of from seventeen to twenty was engaged at different hospitals, of which one was situated as far north as Stettin, and another as far south as Darmstadt. During epidemics their services have proved of incalculable value.

The training and instruction of poor neglected boys is an important branch of the work of the deacons. On an average, from twenty-five to thirty such boys are constantly in the house. They are divided into two or three families, each of which is superintended by two deacons as house-fathers. Each family has its own dwelling-room and dormitory, but they take their meals with the other inmates of the house. The separation into families is for the sake of order; the union at meals for the sake of mutual fraternal intercourse. As far as possible the feeling of being members of one family, of which Mr. Engelbert and his wife are the heads, is kept up among the children and the deacons. The latter teach the former from dawn till dusk. Fifteen on an average are employed in this work. There are workshops connected with the establishment, where the deacons teach the boys tailoring, joinery, and other trades. Some go out with them to the garden and the fields; some assist them in

preparing next day's lessons for the school; and some assist the schoolmaster in teaching them. To school teaching from four to five hours a day are devoted; to labour from five to six.. The instruction is purely elementary, and is entirely based upon the Bible. A considerable portion of the school-time is devoted to instruction in Bible history, to learning by heart and repeating texts, sentences, and hymns, and to singing. As to secular instruction, no more is given than is desirable for boys who are intended for a humble farmer's or artisan's life. Play and bodily exercise are considered as an essential part of the training. After meals half an hour is spent in healthy play-grounds of the establishment. The deacons play with the children, and thus guide them in their recreations as well as in their labour. When they have learned the rudiments of some trade in the establishment, the boys are apprenticed to masters in the town. After confirmation they are dismissed, but still continue in friendly relationship with the establishment and its inspectors.

The boys' school is not intended to be simply a sort of experimental school for the deacons. It is also a refuge for poor, neglected children. Boys from the very lowest class, and even juvenile convicts, are found among its inmates. It would not, therefore, be wise to admit into it orphans and deserted children whose moral character is unimpaired. It is rather intended for such boys as are refused at common orphanages. Neither is there any limit as to age. Big boys of from fourteen to sixteen are taken in. Their training may be difficult, nay, almost hopeless, but it ought not therefore to be left untried.

The terms for a boy's board, clothing, and teaching are 36 thalers (£5, 8s.) a year. For some, 50 thalers (£7, 10s.) are paid. But many are taken gratuitously, the committee preferring to lose a little money rather than run the risk of losing a soul.

But the school serves two ends. While the children are taught and trained, the deacons are exercised in the art of teaching and training; and as they have to deal with the worst characters, they are sure to learn how to manage better boys. Thus they are prepared for situations as house-fathers of orphan houses, as directors of reformatories and asylums for poor children, and as teachers of schools for the poor. From fifteen to twenty deacons, on an average, are constantly engaged in such employments outside the establishment. In 1862 three officiated as house-fathers in the orphanages of Iserlohn, Kreuznach, and Mülheim on the Rhur; some laboured as fellow-artisans and assistants in the reformatory of St. Martin, near Boppard; in the idiot asylum of Hephata, at Gladbach; and in the establishment for poor neglected children, near Bernburg. Others were school teachers at orphan houses, and at schools for destitute children.

The training of the brethren as prison officials forms the fourth branch of the work of the establishment. To this department comparatively few devote themselves. In 1862 two laboured as superintendents in the prison for criminals at Spandau; one as head-superintendent, and another as house-father in the prison for labouring convicts at Plotzkau, near Bernburg; and a third brother assisted these last for a portion of the year. Other two were in the asylum for returned convicts at

Lintorf. Little known as this portion of the work of the Duisburg establishment is, yet it is of inestimable value to society. Much has been done of late years for the moral improvement of prisoners, by their being more frequently visited by the chaplains, and by their being provided with Bibles, tracts, and useful literature. But what fruit can be expected from such measures if the governor and turnkeys, who are in daily intercourse with these unhappy beings, are either harsh and inhuman, or light-minded and unprincipled? No one has a better opportunity of speaking to "the bound" about "the opening of the prison-doors" than the person who has to bring them their meals, watch their movements, and prevent their escape; and it is a real blessing when such a person is a good man, who pities the prisoner as a fallen brother, and tries to win him to goodness with love and kindness.

The candidats, who spend six or twelve months at the establishment, enjoy privileges which must be of great value to them. Their number averages about six. They pay their own board and lodging, but three of them receive 100 thalers (£15) each from the Government towards their support. An opportunity is given them in the establishment of seeing all that is going on in the sphere of the Inner Mission, and of exercising themselves in such labours as will afterwards devolve upon them as pastors of churches and superintendents of schools. First, each candidate devotes twelve hours a week to teaching the children and the deacons in certain branches of instruction. Then they exercise themselves in holding Scripture-reading meetings, under the superintendence of

Mr. Engelbert. One of them conducts worship every morning at the hospital, and visits the patients. Others go in the evening to villages in the neighbourhood of Duisburg to hold prayer-meetings, and to explain the Scriptures to the people. On Sunday they supply vacant parishes, or officiate for ministers in the vicinity. During their stay in the House, the whole establishment life is thrown open to them. Its numerous concerns and all the important questions relating to the training of children, or the treatment of the sick, or the dealings with the poor, are discussed with them. On two evenings in the week they assemble with the inspector and the deacons as a family circle (*Abendkränzchen*) for free and friendly conversation about all that has been going on during the previous days in the different departments of the establishment. One tells his experiences in the hospital; another relates what occurred at his visits among the poor; a third gives an account of what he witnessed during his stay in a prison, from which he has just returned; and a fourth communicates the difficulties he has recently met with, or the pleasures he has enjoyed among the children of the house. Opinions are exchanged, questions are broached, advice is asked and given. Thus the candidates are enabled to gather an invaluable amount of practical knowledge, which cannot but yield good fruits in those churches which they will soon have the charge of. "My residence in the Duisburg establishment," one of the candidats wrote some time after he had left it, "forms an epoch in my life. I there gained experience and self-control. I there acquired sympathy and interest in the principal work of these latter days, viz., the Inner

Mission. My insight into the various duties and functions of the practical work of the ministry, and my fitness for that work, have been increased. The remembrance of my stay at the establishment will always fill me with the most sincere gratitude."

This is the fruitful tree that has sprung up from the little seed which Pastor Fliedner sowed nearly twenty years ago. Owing to his innumerable occupations at Kaiserswerth he resigned the presidency of the Duisburg establishment in 1856. But the institution was quite safe under the superintendence of such a man as Mr. Engelbert.

III.

Some Account of the Labours of the Deacons in Silesia, Brandenburg, the South of Russia, and Schleswig.

The good which those who are in trouble derive from the Duisburg establishment cannot, perhaps, be better seen than by looking at the valuable assistance which the deacons have rendered in times of epidemic diseases or calamitous catastrophes. Even as early as the year 1848, these noble friends of humanity found an opportunity of giving proof of their faithful and courageous sympathy in places where but few ventured to risk their life. A terrible plague, caused by famine, broke out in Upper Silesia, on the frontiers of Poland. No sooner did the report of the fearful misery that afflicted those districts



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reach the people of Rhenish Prussia, than four deacons at once set out for that distant abode of death and destruction. Day and night they stood between the living and the dead, fighting the terrible foe with unflinching courage, till typhus caught hold of them and dragged them to the brink of the grave. Their lives were spared, however, but one of them had a paralytic stroke while in the height of the fever, and was obliged to return to Duisburg, where he continues to reside as an invalid, revered and loved by all the inmates of the house,—a living monument of one of the earliest exploits which the noble band of Duisburg heroes can boast of. His three companions, after their recovery, found themselves surrounded by thousands of poor, fatherless children whom the plague had bereaved. They travelled through the country in all directions seeking shelter and bread for those pitiful creatures. Nor were their efforts unsuccessful. The noble Count Frederic von Stolberg, struck by their unparalleled zeal and disinterested love, permitted them to found an orphan house for Protestant children on his grounds near Pless, on the banks of the Vistula. Thirty poor little creatures found both shelter and food under its hospitable roof. But here the three brethren encountered a number of difficulties. They had to be father, mother, and teacher to these children. And this in a country where the Polish language is spoken, of which they scarcely understood one syllable! Then the children were dreadfully neglected and stupid, almost verging upon idiocy. And to complete their trouble, a fever common to that marshy climate attacked them, as it were, regularly by turns, and seemed determined to

keep one of them at least inactive. Still, with prayerful perseverance and inexhaustible patience, they at length overcame all these difficulties, and the prosperous Stolberg orphanage is a striking proof how true Christian charity may succeed, even when thwarted by adverse circumstances, and unsupported by the usual means of assistance.

At that sad time when the cholera visited Europe with its fatal scourge, the Duisburg deacons were found both in the hospitals and in the families where it exerted its utmost violence. The towns of Elberfeld and Osnabrück were greatly blessed with their labours of love. Alternately at the deathbed and the grave, it was a marvel to their friends that their lives were spared in the midst of such a fearful mortality. But this was more remarkable at Lütte, a village in the vicinity of Berlin, than anywhere else. Two deacons were sent there in 1855 at the request of the Government. On their arrival, they found that a great portion of the population had already been carried off by the plague. Sixty patients were still hovering between life and death. The dread of infection was so great, that nobody could be found willing to tend them. Even the dead bodies remained unburied. Here there was an immense amount of work for the deacons. They had to clean the sick-rooms, to disinfect the houses, to provide food and cook it for the patients, and to see the orphans sheltered and provided for. The Government commissioner declared in his report, that "it was owing to the activity of the deacons that the spread of the epidemic was so soon put a stop to." And the clergyman and the provost looked upon the arrival of

the deacons as a striking proof of the love and faithful care of the Lord during this period of trial and affliction.

But, in addition to their labours among the sick, the services of the deacons were of incalculable value to the navvies who laboured at the Oder works, in Brandenburg, from 1853 to 1859. From 2000 to 5000 people were at work. They lived in rough wooden huts, slept on the ground, and cooked their dinner on bricks before their doors. There were an eating-house, a shed for a church, dwellings for the surveyors, the police officers, the minister, and the physician; and an hospital. Nor was the latter superfluous. It was full all the year round with patients suffering from gastric and low fever, caused by the evaporations from the river. The Government had to appoint an additional medical man to meet the wants of these poor people. But what was most painfully felt was the lack of able and faithful nurses. There were some nurses, but their conduct was most scandalous. Of course, respectable persons could not be found to accept a merely temporary situation in the midst of a desert, and where an epidemic was continually raging. Those who could be obtained were just people who could get nothing better to do: returned convicts, vagabonds, and thieves. The poor patients were nursed and robbed at the same time. The nurses, to save themselves the trouble of administering the medicines at the prescribed times, either poured them down their patients' throats at one gush, or threw them out of the window. Patients who were hovering between life and death were made drunk with brandy. All this was very well known to the medical

men, and the guilty ones were duly punished; but their successors were no better, and perhaps worse. In this dismal state of things the minister of the place wrote to Pastor Fliedner.

His cry for help was not left unanswered. Fliedner, of course, could do nothing, for this was not a case for deaconesses, but he sent the letter to Mr. Engelbert, who at once replied to it. "It gives me unspeakable pleasure," he wrote, "to be able to tell you that our Church is no longer powerless in this matter. She has apt men and women for the hospital, who, from love to God, care for their brethren, and desire nothing but to see them helped both as to body and soul." An arrangement was then made with the officials of the place by which the hospital was entirely given up to the care of the Duisburg brethren. In the worst months of the year from seven to nine were employed. Mr. Engelbert appointed one of them to be chief, upon whose shoulders the whole management rested. He discharged his duties so well, that at the end of five years, when the works on the Oder were completed, he was honoured by the Government with the situation of governor of the prison for criminals at Brandenburg. The number of patients often amounted to 190 at a time, so that the hospital could not contain them. Auxiliary hospitals had therefore to be fitted up. On some days from fifteen to twenty patients were brought in. In most cases these new comers had to be cleaned from top to toe, and their clothes submitted to a boiling process. At times, when there was a relaxation of disease, the deacons devoted their spare time to visiting the navvies in their huts, distributing tracts and Bibles, and

speaking to them about the only Physician who can cure both body and soul.

A commission was sent by the king to inquire into the progress and state of the works. In its report the following statement occurs :—" The conduct of the deacons has been perfectly irreproachable and inoffensive, and they have shown in their work among the sufferers, which they have performed with patient, persevering, and tender-hearted love, that they have always kept in mind their life's task, viz., to serve Christ in His suffering members. By prayer and earnest addresses, they have tried to maintain order and discipline on a religious basis among those who were entrusted to their care, and their efforts have been crowned with gladdening success."

But perhaps the most interesting, and also the most beneficial, of all the services of the deacons was that which they performed in 1860 to some hundred German colliers who emigrated to the south of Russia, and who would, humanly speaking, but for their indefatigable activity and faithful assistance, have perished from starvation and ill-treatment.

The last Danish war also witnessed the valuable services of the Duisburg deacons. Sixteen of them went to Schleswig in February, 1864, at the request of the King of Prussia, and partly at the expense of philanthropic committees at Elberfeld, Barmen, and other places. " Our brethren," thus Mr. Engelbert wrote to me, " have in the various lazarets tended the most serious cases, assisted in carrying the wounded soldiers from the field

of battle, and day and night, with indefatigable zeal, helped in the dressing of their wounds. As a sign of their calling, they wore on the white band round their arm, which, as is known, is the badge of all persons officiating in the army, a simple little black cross." I should be too prolix were I to give an account of the labours which these excellent men performed in the sight of death, and must content myself with only a short extract from a letter, written on the day when the Dybböl Sconces were taken :—

"About two o'clock P.M. we arrived at the ruins of Rackebull, with the lazaret-waggons and carts destined for carrying away the wounded, marching ahead of the company. All the house doors had been carried off and used for the bivouac-tents which were on the field, and now stood empty, in the same condition as our troops had left them in this morning. Tables, chairs, everything was lying in a mess. An empty farmhouse was appointed as a place for dressing the wounded, and was marked out by white flags. The farmyard was covered with straw and straw-bags, and no sooner was the bandage-waggon opened, and the instruments and the materials for dressing produced, than one waggon after another appeared, carrying both friends and enemies, who now, helpless and tormented by common pains, moaned for help and succour. The invalid-carriers, bathed in sweat, brought the severely wounded ones on litters. The temporary bandage which had been applied on the field of battle being replaced, the patients were refreshed with wine, which the surgeons carried, and with oranges, of which I had plenty in a large hamper; and

they were then taken to our lazaret. I looked like a packed donkey: on both sides a knapsack with bandages; on my back woollen blankets in a strap; in my button-holes scissors, pincers, needles, etc.; and across my chest were straps to which two canteens, filled with wine, were fastened. One of the officers jokingly said to me: 'Of you it may be truly said, *Omnia sua secum portans;* but I am sure you have forgotten one indispensable article.' 'And what is that article?' I asked. 'Cigars,' he replied. 'Oh, I can help you to these too,' I said, and produced some from my coat pocket. A Danish officer's wounds had just been dressed; he suffered great pain; but I offered him a cigar, which gave him much pleasure, and he seemed to puff away a part of his sufferings with the clouds of smoke. The sun set, and the dressing was continued in the rooms of the farmhouse; but still waggon after waggon arrived, bringing more sufferers. It was said that there were many still lying in the sconces. Some surgeons went there, and at their request I joined them. When we arrived at Sconces 9 and 10, we found plenty to do. We brought the sufferers as far as from the bridge-head of Sonderburg, from the shore, and from other remote corners. I conducted the carriers, and helped them to convey the wounded to an old house, where they were dressed. The sconces presented a frightful sight. The dead lay in heaps; and here and there a living man was pulled out. Rifles, arms of every description, ammunition, blankets, mining tools, collapsed block-houses, pools of blood, and corpses, covered the earth; while the moon diffused its soft mild light upon many a pale face and

many a glazed eye. We found the last wounded Danes on the shore about eleven o'clock, opposite Alsen. While we were dragging them off, the balls whistled over our heads. It was past one o'clock in the morning when I returned from the sconces to Westerschabeck."

Such are the labours in which the Duisburg deacons are engaged for the good of their suffering fellow-beings. Volumes might be filled with an account of them; and these volumes would undoubtedly contain the most eloquent eulogium that could be written on the power of Christian charity. Indeed, they would be simply a record of the acts of men who have left all and followed Him who went about doing good.

IV.

The Sunday Journal—Regulations and Statistics.

To promote the financial interests of the Establishment, and at the same time to sow good seed among the people, Mr. Engelbert in 1850 started a cheap weekly journal, under the title of *Sonntagsblatt*, or "Sunday Paper of the Inner Mission for Rhineland and Westphalia." It has four quarto pages, containing eight closely-printed columns, and costs only fifteenpence a year. It has met the wants of the common people so well, that it has a circulation of 5000 copies, and yields

a net profit of about £70 a year. And this success is not at all remarkable, for the paper contains a great variety of interesting matter adapted to the edification and instruction of its readers in the knowledge of things concerning the kingdom of God. A devotional article on a passage of Scripture comes first. Then extracts from the history of the Christian Church; sketches from real life in the sphere of the Inner Mission; notices of churches and societies; addresses and devotional papers for furthering the practice of Christian charity; communications about the *Gustavus-Adolphus Society*, prisons and asylums, young men's associations, foreign missions, etc. etc. The style is popular, and exhibits a happy combination of communicative talent with extensive information. And no wonder, when such men as Mr. Engelbert, Pastor Bleibtreu, and Pastor Dietrich, Director of the Asylum at Lintorf, apply their talents and rich practical knowledge to the service of this interesting work.

The Duisburg House is the centre of a work which spreads its branches all over Europe, and even as far as America. From East and West, South and North, weekly letters come in from the brethren who labour in the various quarters, and thus the director is kept cognisant of all that is going on. Nor does he receive this knowledge for himself alone. He is not the master of the deacons, to rule them with autocratic authority; he is their elder brother, their fellow-servant in the work of the Lord, their guide and counsellor, under their one common Master. He therefore keeps them informed of

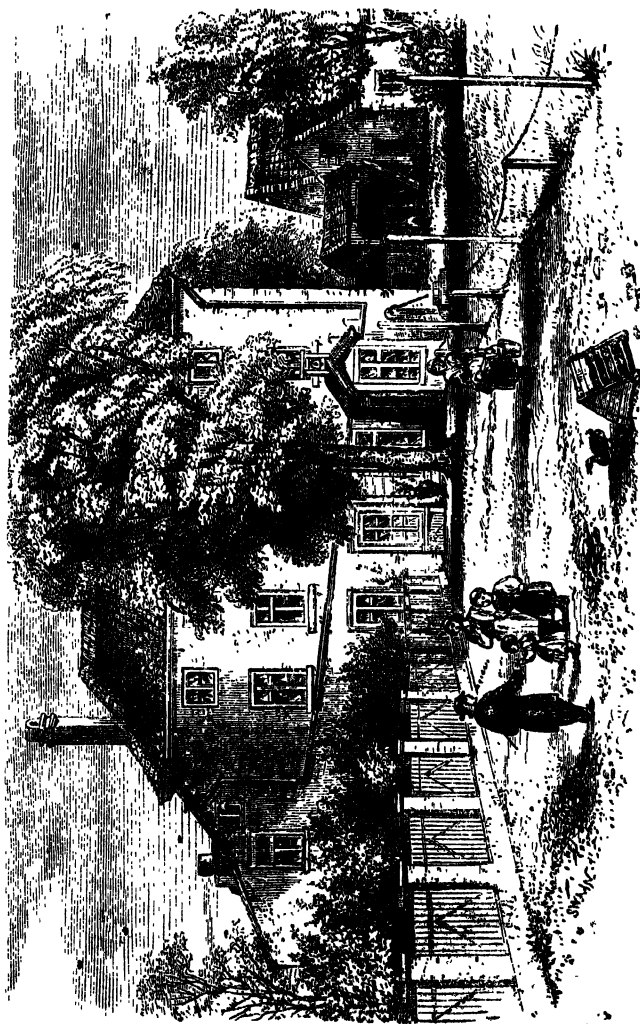
each other's locality, experiences, labours, and prospects, that they may participate in each other's joys and sufferings, and pray for each other with brotherly affection. The weekly "Sunday Paper," which contains extracts from the latest news about the brethren, is sent to them all; and when a letter arrives, containing something worth communicating, it is copied with chemical ink, and sent to all the brethren at once. Mr. Engelbert is also the regular minister of all the persons living in the house, or in the service of the Establishment. In 1853, the Institution was acknowledged by the Royal Consistory as a parish by itself; and Mr. Engelbert was appointed its clergyman.

The last Report which has come under my notice is that of 1862. Eleven young men were that year admitted on trial. The number of deacons then amounted to ninety. Of these from seventeen to twenty were engaged in nursing the sick; from eighteen to twenty in the training of children; about twenty in ministering to the poor; and two in prisons.

Four candidates for the holy ministry received instruction in the practice of Inner Mission labours. The number of candidates who had done so since the commencement of the Establishment was forty-eight, of whom twenty-four were natives of the Rhine province, twelve of Westphalia, and twelve of other districts.

Twenty boys were under the care of the deacons in the Establishment; while twenty others, who were apprenticed to various trades, were supported and clothed.

The total income during the year 1862 amounted to 17,788 thalers (£2668), including 880 thalers (£132),



for the Lintorf Asylum, of which a short account is given in next section. Of this sum about £124 were donations. The King gave £25. About £900 was derived from collections at houses and in churches. The rest of the income was made up from sums paid for the nursing of invalids, the boarding of children, etc.

The total expenditure amounted to about 17,855 thalers (£2678). Of this sum about £285 went towards the support of the Lintorf Asylum. The Establishment household cost 3400 thalers (£510); the hospital, 3593 thalers (£534); the salaries 2123 thalers (£318). And there was a deficit of about £10.

The property of the Society consists of a capital of 7800 thalers (£1170) received from two bequests, and of five main buildings, which, together with barns, workshops, wash-houses, gardens, and fields, occupy an area of about 120 acres of land. This property is burdened with a debt of 27,272 thalers (£4090).

Should one go to visit the Deacon-house at Duisburg he need not expect to see a magnificent building adorning a spacious square or a main thoroughfare. He will be conducted to a humble gate in a rather narrow and dark looking back yard, or court, which one would hardly suppose to be the entrance to the scene of such important and extensive labours. Nor will the interior of the Establishment arrest his attention by its architectural beauty. It is a strongly built but old fashioned house, provided with a broad staircase, and spacious and high roofed rooms and passages. But all these are more adapted for utility and comfort than for æsthetic enjoy-

ment and show. Whatever there may be deficient, however, in the outward appearance and architectural structure of the old building, is soon forgotten when one walks through the spacious well laid out gardens, and inspects the new buildings, especially the hospital, whose simple but symmetrical walls rise up with dignity, as if conscious of the important object they are destined for. And when one bears in mind that here he is in the centre of a great work which, not for the sake of honour or profit, but only for Christ's sake, blesses thousands of suffering, neglected, and helpless creatures, at a great expense of trouble, hardship, and disappointment, he will appreciate all the more the unassuming, humble appearance of the whole.

Duisburg, hid as it were in a remote corner of the world, disdains to elicit your admiration by the splendour of its brick and mortar, but rather seeks to raise it by the value and beauty of the works which you witness.

THE ESTABLISHMENT FOR INDIGENT CHILDREN AT NEUHOF.

(NEAR STRASBURG.)

I

The History of Philippe Jacob Wurtz, the Joiner.

WALKING out at the Austerlitz gate of the town of Strasburg, you proceed to the village of Neuhof, which is only three miles distant from the town. The road, called the Lyons road, lined on both sides with high trees, leads us through the small village of Neudorf, where crowds of cackling geese remind us that we are in the fatherland of the famous *pâtés de foie gras* (goose-liver pâtés). We then pass by a large drill-field, called the *Polygone*, and perhaps are overtaken by a squadron of dragoons or meet a company of zouaves; for Strasburg, as every one knows, contains one of the largest garrisons in France. And though the town, notwithstanding that it has been in the possession of the French for nearly two centuries, retains its German aspect in the architecture of its houses and in the manners and dresses of its inhabitants, yet you cannot forget that you are on French territory, for the place and its environs

teem with swarms of red-trousered soldiers, whose elegant French tongue strangely contrasts with the rough German patois of the Alsace people.

On entering the village of Neuhof we feel rather disinclined to proceed farther, as the place looks as dirty as a pig-sty. Pools of rain-water, in which swarms of geese tumble and splash about, dot the unpaved road. A kind of pavement, however, running alongside a row of ugly little houses inhabited by small farmers and peasants, enables us to step on without being compelled to wade through the mud. At length we reach a broad gate which gives entrance into a spacious farmyard. This is the spot where I propose to lead you. I wish to point out to you a large two-storied building at the bottom of the yard. The inscription over its front door, *Soli Deo Gloria*, tells you that it is destined for a good object. It is the happy refuge of upwards of one hundred and twenty poor neglected children, who here are being rescued from temporal and eternal misery. To the left you observe a one-storied dwelling-house, with the inscription in German, *The Lord is a sun and shield.* It is the residence of some of the officials, and contains apartments for extraordinary cases of disease. To the right the whole length of the yard is occupied by a series of buildings, viz., a bakery, a wash-house, stables, barns, and sheds. Of all these premises, nothing was to be seen about forty years ago but the dwelling-house to the left: all the rest are the fruit, since that time, of Christian love towards the neglected and the lost. And if you ask who it was who laid the foundation of this good work, and set it going so that it could thrive and bear

fruit, the answer is, an octogenarian artisan of the name of Philippe Jacob Wurtz.

Mr. Philippe Jacob Wurtz was born at Strasburg on the 19th October, 1745. His father, whom he was so unfortunate as to lose in his fifth year, was a joiner, and left his widow and child in straitened circumstances. The poor woman had to earn daily bread for herself and her boy by sewing and washing in the houses of the citizens. In those days school-training was not at a very high pitch. Writing, reading, and a little arithmetic, constituted all the learning that the Strasburg youth could obtain at the public schools. Mrs. Wurtz could just barely afford as much as was required to put her child to school while she was at her daily work. The school instruction was carried on in German. A knowledge of French was indispensable to get on in society; but it was not taught in the public schools. It could only be learnt from private teachers, who, as they had to give their lessons in the evening, and the Strasburg streets were not yet possessed of lamps, used to walk about with lanterns, and hence were called "lantern-preceptors." Mrs. Wurtz could not afford to pay a lantern-preceptor; and poor Philippe, though a born Frenchman, was henceforth, and during his eighty years' life, obliged to live in his native country without being able to speak its tongue. Still, although his scientific training was scanty, his moral and religious education was excellent. Nor was the care which his good mother bestowed upon him in this respect in vain. At an early period of his life he showed a great delight in everything

which concerned the service of God. As soon as he was able to read without much spelling, the Bible was the companion of his leisure hours. When he was nine years of age his mother could not give him a greater treat than to permit him to attend the weekly prayer-meeting at church. And when Sunday evening came, with its hallowed quietness, little Philippe would assemble some boys and girls to sing hymns from the Strasburg collection, while his mother accompanied them with the cithern, —a musical instrument which in those days adorned the parlour of every house in Strasburg.

At the age of fourteen Philippe was apprenticed to a joiner; and when he had reached his twentieth he knew his trade so well that he could commence his *Wanderschaft.* This was a moment of sore trial. His good aged mother had become blind, and it seemed to be his duty to stay at home and support and comfort her. The rules of his trade guild, however, required that he should travel abroad for six years to perfect his knowledge of his trade in the workshops of foreign masters. This was like a law of the Medes and Persians. To disobey it was to exclude one's self from the guild for life and to become unworthy of the hand of any honest citizen's daughter. So poor Philippe had no choice. He provided a place in an asylum for his blind mother, and took his staff. The guardians of the guild stuffed his knapsack, dropped a few gilders into his hand, and escorted him solemnly as far as the gates of the town. If Philippe went on his way with his head bowed down like a bulrush, it was not from the weight of his knapsack. Still it contained a precious treasure—his Bible.

And it was well he trusted in that help, for he now entered a life full of dangers and temptations. Whatever may be said in favour of the German system of travelling apprenticeships, it is certain that they ruin both the bodies and souls of many young German artisans. It was indeed a wonder that Philippe came back, after nine years' travel, as sober and chaste as he had departed. But he had got a sight of the world in its true colours. Himself a pattern of the beneficial effects of a godly education, he had witnessed in the lives of many of his comrades the awful fruits of a childhood spent without God. This experience laid the foundation in his heart of that compassionate sympathy with poor and neglected children, which he afterwards showed in such a touching manner. Perhaps he would now have stretched out a hand to their rescue had he but known how to begin; but it was not yet the age of home missions, ragged schools, and philanthropic asylums. Besides he was a poor man, alone in the world, and bound to look out for the means of self-support. Still, as far as his power and means went, he tried to save and protect as many souls as he could from ruin. Knowing how dangerous the Sunday evenings were, especially to young unmarried artisans, he opened his small dwelling for as many of them as it could contain. There he would be seen sitting in the midst of them, Bible in hand, talking with them about the concerns of their souls, and praying and singing hymns. Thus he was instrumental in leading many a young man from the path of destruction into the fold of the good Shepherd. Populous, bustling Strasburg was all unconscious that in one of its

dark back streets there was a light shining, which ere long was to shed its beneficial lustre over hundreds of souls sitting in the region and shadow of death.

It was not until the year 1791 that Mr. Wurtz, now in his forty-sixth year, succeeded in starting in business for himself. Though, owing to his limited means, he established his shop in one of the back streets, yet he was soon favoured with orders from people in all parts of the town. The fact was, that Mr. Wurtz soon became known as an honest and faithful tradesman. And no wonder, indeed. When about to write out a bill, he used to kneel down and pray to be delivered from the temptation of charging too much. And this was the more extraordinary that he was not in circumstances favourable to this kind of devotion. He was often in such want of money that he did not know what to do. One day, for instance, he had just entered into a profitable contract for building a house, when unfortunately he found that he was short of timber. The person who employed him declined to advance a farthing till the house was finished; and the timber merchants refused to give credit, for it was the dreadful period of the French Revolution. With a heavy heart poor Wurtz walked out into the fields. The sun was shining brightly, and all creation seemed to rejoice; but in Philippe's soul there was a mist of unbelief and despondency which clouded the beautiful scenery around. He stopped on a bridge, and leaning against the railing gave free vent to his distress. A stranger came up, and noticing his sad countenance, asked him the cause. It was soon told. "Why, if that is all," the stranger replied, "I will lend you the money. You can give me it

back when you are able; and if you should never be able, still you are welcome to it." The man was a gardener, whom Mr. Wurtz had never seen before.

Notwithstanding the stormy times which in France closed the eighteenth century, Mr. Wurtz opened his heart and house to the joy of conjugal love. He bore such a high character, that he might have been a successful suitor for the hand of a daughter of any of the well-to-do tradesmen of the town; but he cared little about what jewels his bride might be able to adorn herself with, provided her heart was a jewel of the genuine water. And such was the heart of Miss Bruckert, whom he met with in an orphan house, and, notwithstanding her poverty, recognised as a treasure of great value. During a period of thirty-two years she was the happy partner of his highly blessed life. One blessing, however, was withheld from them: they had no children, and when in 1824 Mrs. Wurtz went to the rest of her Lord, good Philippe found himself as much alone again in this wide world, as when he took his staff and wandered abroad. But eighty summers and winters had now passed over his venerable head. His knapsack, too, was heavier than it was sixty years ago, and the good master joiner would often muse over the question what he should do with its contents, being well aware that he could not carry any of it into the country he was going to enter soon.

II.

The Foundation of the Neuhof Establishment.

The question which had so long puzzled Mr. Wurtz was solved in a peculiar manner. One day he learnt that there was a company of Christian friends who met once every fortnight at the house of one of the members to discuss the alarming and deplorable condition of the many poor children who, in consequence of the recent wars, were reduced to utter neglect and destitution. Various schemes for the cure of the evil were broached, and it was generally agreed that a school and an asylum, conducted in a Christian spirit, were the first requisites. As, however, none of the friends were possessed of earthly means, they could do very little, and they were obliged to limit themselves to committing the matter in prayer to the Father of the orphans and the Saviour of the lost. The particulars of these meetings, which were communicated to Mr. Wurtz, interested him very much. Being prevented by his great age from going out, he sent an invitation to the members to visit him at his house. When they entered the humble dwelling, in one of the back streets of the town, they hardly knew what to think; and when, having been shown into a back parlour behind a joiner's dusty workshop, they noticed an old grey-headed man clad in an humble artisan's dress, they began to surmise that they had been invited to help a poor decrepit creature out of his last difficulties. There was, however, no time left to them to put their hands in

their pockets; for Mr. Wurtz kindly bade them be seated, and said,—

"Dear friends, I was once a poor lad; and as to my late wife, I took her from the orphan house. When we married we were as poor as the sparrows on the house-top; but the Lord has so blessed me since then, that I am possessed now of this little house and a small capital. It is not, however, my property, but a talent which the Lord has intrusted to my stewardship, and which He will claim again with usury. My wife and I could never agree as to what we should do with it. But I know now. I have been told that you wish to help in the rescue of poor lost children; and I think I must give you what the Lord has given to me. I will commence by giving you 4000 francs (£160) and the use of my workshop. I have let my shop for the last eight years, as I was compelled by old age to give up my trade. It became vacant six months ago, and notwithstanding my having frequently advertised it in the newspaper, no tenant has yet turned up. I now see why the Lord has kept it empty. We will make a school of it, if you have no objection to begin your good work under my humble roof."

The friends of course had none. They left the noble patriarch with joy in their heart and tears in their eyes. A few days later a person came and offered Mr. Wurtz a high rent; but the shop could not be got now for ten times the amount. Mr. Wurtz thought, "No tenant can possibly pay me such a high rent as my present one."

The workshop was soon adapted for a school. One morning in June 1825 twelve children, upon whose faces

and clothing neglect and destitution had put their stamp, walked in at the door by which for upwards of forty years many a rough deal had been brought in, to be carried out again in the shape of a handsome and well-polished piece of furniture. The same process had still to be gone through; and it was to be hoped that the living materials, not less rough and hard to be worked than the dead ones, would be as capable of refinement too. Mr. Wurtz's workshop reminded one of a greenhouse, where spring and winter combine in the most charming harmony, when the octogenarian patriarch was to be seen sitting among the little folks, telling them stories from the Bible, and singing hymns with them to the praise of the great Friend of children. Nor did Father Wurtz forget that the connexion between soul and body is very close, and that he must not expect that the one will bloom when the other is starving. Before the teacher came to instruct the children how to read and write "breakfast," Mr. Wurtz gave them the means of showing that they needed no instruction how to eat it. And when, at the close of the day, they were able to calculate that if you take twelve from a dozen, nothing is left, he enabled them to prove the correctness of their calculation by a supper consisting of a pile of twelve pieces of bread and butter.

When the report of these proceedings was spread through the town, many a feeling heart was touched with admiration and sympathy. One of the first gifts that was sent in to the friends was a silver box from a lady, on one side of which was engraved the story of Moses being rescued from the Nile by Pharaoh's daughter. On the other side the Saviour was represented speaking to the

Samaritan woman about the water of life. A citizen, whose son had died at the time, presented the school with the bequest of the lamented deceased to the value of 1000 francs (£40). These tokens of sympathy greatly encouraged Mr. Wurtz and his friends. Subscription lists were circulated, which were soon filled with names, and the sums thus collected, together with the 4000 francs which Mr. Wurtz had promised, laid the foundation of a Protestant Establishment for Indigent Children.

And it soon became necessary to obtain a suitable building. The workshop proved by far too strait. The one-storied house at Neuhof, with its farmyard, garden, and field, about two and a half acres in all, was for sale. Though the sum which the friends could calculate upon was not sufficient to cover the price, yet the property was bought, as they knew that the needed portion of the money might easily be borrowed. A good married couple were found to take the superintendence, and in October 1825 sixteen children took up their abode at the new institution. When Mr. Wurtz saw his little friends walk away from his shop never to come back, he felt like a man who by some accident loses the whole of his family at one sweep. His house became to him as dull and gloomy as a tomb; and though he was old enough to die, yet he did not want to be buried alive. He resolved to quit his house and to follow his little family to the Neuhof; as a hen walks after her chickens.

It seemed, however, that Providence thought the time had come to take the old servant to his heavenly rest. On a sudden, some ten days after the children had left, a report was brought to the friends of the school that old

Philippe had been taken seriously ill. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon. They hastened to his house. There the venerable patriarch lay on his couch, pale and unconscious, like one fallen on his last sleep. A doctor was called. He came immediately, and when he saw the patient, shrugged his shoulders. "Good Mr. Wurtz," he said, "is going to leave us; the death sweat is already begun." This was a Job's message to the afflicted friends; not only because they loved the dying one like a father, but also because they had not yet got the 4000 francs which he had promised, and the money for the Neuhof had to be paid within a few days. They left the house with heavy hearts. Next morning, no sooner had the sun gilded the cock of the splendid Munster tower, than they sent to his house to inquire. Who can describe their joyful surprise when, instead of the expected message of death, Mr. Wurtz's kind regards came back, with many thanks for their friendly care, and with the assurance that he was perfectly well again? One of the friends speeded to the house. The old man met him with a smile on his face. "And behold we live!" he said, in the words of Paul. He then kindly rebuked his friend because of his unbelief, and because he had called in a doctor, since a mightier One had said, "I am thy physician!" "You should have known," he added, "that I could not die before all is right with regard to the school." He then sold his house, presented the parish church with a considerable sum, gave several other sums to individuals whom he knew to be worthy of support, sent a handsome donation to the Strasburg Bible Society, put the promised 4000 francs into the hands of his friends, and repaired to

the Neuhof to live and to die among the children, whom he loved as the apple of his eye.

It looked as if the short but serious indisposition which brought Father Wurtz to the brink of the grave, was intended by Providence to teach him a few lessons. One of them was that a man should not allow the sun to go down upon his promises, since life is like a tent pitched on an ice-floor. One day's heat may melt away the solid pavement, and, however good your intentions may be, down you go with them to the bottom, never to come up again. A day on which you have performed one good deed is worth more than a hundred days on each of which you have uttered a hundred promises.

Mr. Wurtz was permitted for nearly three years to be the happy witness of the beneficial effect of his good work. During that period he seemed to be like a priest in the temple of charity which he had founded, as he witnessed the Institution grow and flourish. It must have been a moment never to be forgotten by many a child, when the old man, after an earnest but gentle address, would take it by the hand, kneel down with it in a closet, and pray for its true welfare at the footstool of an all-merciful Saviour. It must have had a softening, truly-refining effect upon many a rude wild character, to observe the grateful feeling with which he would respond to every service performed for him. The benefits which the Institution derived from the daily example of this truly rich man must have been more valuable to it than the money which he gave for its foundation. But had he not given the latter, it is doubtful whether he would have been able to give the former at all. Nothing makes a Christian

more capable of pouring forth a stream of love, kindness. and joy, than the consciousness of his having performed a good work. The money which we keep for ourselves, when we do not need it, cannot but dam up that fountain; but no sooner is it removed from the heart and put in its right place than innumerable springs of joy and peace burst up.

The prosperity of the Establishment increased so rapidly that six months after its foundation it gave shelter to twenty-four children. It was now obvious that the one-storied house was too small. Nor was the prospect wanting of ability soon to build a larger one. The good report of the Institution stirred many liberal hearts to send in handsome gifts. Often a cart would drive up into the yard loaded with provisions and all sorts of contributions in kind. Mr. Wurtz would often, with tears in his eyes, press the hands of the people who conveyed the presents. These, visibly touched at the aspect of the venerable patriarch, would take him for a poor man, who was allowed to share the benefits of the Establishment, and could scarcely believe that he was the chief founder of the place.

At the close of the year it was found that upwards of eighty children had knocked at the door of this place of refuge, the greater portion of whom had to be refused from want of room. Public opinion began strongly to recommend the building of a spacious asylum. Numerous papers and journals, such as "Les Archives du Christianisme," "Le Journal des Prisons," "Le Bulletin de la Société Biblique," "La Revue Protestante," etc., stirred the sympathy of the public for the Neuhof Establishment.

The two Protestant consistories of Strasburg recommended it warmly to their churches, and subscription lists were circulated among them, which met with a surprising response. In England, also, men of influence took up the matter, and tried to raise donations. Nevertheless, in spite of these encouraging tokens of sympathy, the Committee hesitated to begin the work, as there was still a debt of 8000 francs (£320) to be cleared off. So the second year was allowed to elapse without any alteration being made. Meanwhile the small house was organised on the best scheme which the narrow space admitted of. The school instruction was raised to a higher scale. It was brought to comprise, besides reading, writing, and arithmetic, the elements of history, geography, and physics, and linear drawing. Some boys were promoted to the rank of monitors, and encouraged to engage in mutual education. Religious instruction was imparted every day. Seven hours of the day were devoted to school-teaching, and six to various kinds of work, such as basket-making, joinery, cabinet-making, pasteboard work, ribbon-weaving, domestic and field labour, etc. One of the officials who was a tailor taught some of the boys his trade; and a shoemaker in the neighbourhood was engaged for a similar purpose.

The effect which solid instruction and regular labour produced upon the children was quite amazing. The Institution fairly passed its probation, and proved a real blessing to the country. Its enlargement could not longer be delayed. Money poured in, specially designed by the liberal givers for the building of a new house. To put a stop to the hesitation of the Committee, Mr. Wurtz

presented it with 10,000 francs (£400), being the last money which the noble patriarch had to give. He destined it exclusively for the building of the new Establishment. This enabled the Committee to make up their minds. A circular was issued, in which the public was informed, that, since a debt still pressed on the Institution, no sums would be set apart for the new building but what were expressly given for it. It was resolved at the same time not to incur any new debt, and rather to stop building than to stop paying. Under these conditions the foundation-stone was solemnly laid in May, 1827. A copper plate was inserted in it, bearing the following inscription:—

Evangelical Establishment for the Education of Poor Children, built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple unto the Lord.

I do not doubt but that it was pious Father Wurtz who selected this inscription from the Bible. It was a copy of the inscription which the Spirit of God had written on his own heart. Of course he was present at the solemnity; and among the numerous witnesses of this important proceeding there certainly was none who witnessed it with more cordial gratitude to God and with more fervent prayers for its success. It seemed as if his divine Master had just protracted his life in order to enable him to enjoy this happy event. The next year he was, after a short indisposition, taken to his heavenly rest. His last word was, *Gottlob!* (Praise God!)

His mortal frame was interred in the garden of the Establishment. Behind a weeping willow that shades his grave, a stone monument, simple but of good workmanship, reminds the children, in four inscriptions, of their kind and pious benefactor. These inscriptions are:—

On the first side: PHILIPPE JACOB WURTZ, *chief Founder of the Establishment for the Education of Poor Children at Neuhof, born Oct.* 19, 1745, *deceased June* 23, 1828.

On the second side: WORDS OF THE DECEASED IN 1825: *This earthly good is not my property; it is a talent which the Lord has lent me, and which I must return to Him with usury. I will return it to Him by giving it to the least of these His brethren.*

On the third side: WORDS OF THE LORD: *Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*

On the fourth side: GRATEFUL FEELING OF THE CHILDREN: *Lord, Thou hast delivered my soul from death, and my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living* (Ps. lvi. 13).

When standing at this remarkable spot and reading these inscriptions I felt as if I were standing at the grave of a beloved father. I looked round about, and far as my eyes could see I observed nothing but this good man's work. To the left I saw the extensive premises, of which he had laid the foundation, resounding with the hymns, and the cheerful, lively noise of a hundred happy children. To the right were fertile grounds, cultivated by the hands of those who, before they came to this

place, had been only taught to waste and destroy. I could not help remarking to the good house-father who guided me to this touching spot, "If this is the fruit of the small capital which this simple workman gathered during a long life, how strange it seems that Providence did not intrust large sums to him in early life, seeing that he proved himself indeed one who knew how to spend them well!"

"Thus human wisdom would judge," the house-father replied; "but who can tell whether good Father Wurtz, if he had become a rich man at an early period of his life, would not have been mastered by that same power which he, as a grey-headed man, knew so well how to control?"

I reluctantly left this tomb, which seemed to preach to me a beautiful sermon. Once more glancing around, and remembering that already upwards of 400 lost children had been restored to society, and perhaps to their Saviour, I said to my friend,

"Let us never think that a good work is too insignificant to be capable of bearing abundant fruits; and let us never think that it is too late to do it."

III

Organisation and Progress of the Institution

After having given an account of the origin of the Neuhof Establishment, I will direct the attention of my readers to its progress up to the present time, to the way

in which it is managed, and to the condition in which I found it on my visit in December, 1863.

No sooner had Mr. Wurtz taken the first step towards founding the Reformatory than his friends united into a committee, consisting of five members, all of them residents in Strasburg. They all belonged to the respectable class of society. One of them was a professor in a Protestant seminary, two were clergymen, and two were landed proprietors. The sanction of the Government was therefore easily obtained. They assumed the title of *The Protestant Establishment for the Education of Poor Children of both Sexes;* and its object was specified under six heads :—

1. To rescue orphans or physically and morally neglected and abandoned children from sin and its consequent misery.

2. To train them in the knowledge of the truths of the Gospel, and to exercise them in a practical Christian life.

3. To provide them with good elementary teaching, through the medium of schools connected with the Establishment. Of these schools there should be three: one for common elementary teaching, one for industry, and one for agriculture.

4. To enable them to learn a trade, or to adapt them for domestic service.

5. To watch over them during their apprenticeship after their removal from the Establishment.

6. By these means to make them useful members of society.

According to the rules founded on this basis, the Com-

mittee (the members of which are never more than ten, nor less than seven) has the entire control and responsibility of the work. It meets at least once a month. It appoints and superintends the Director, or house-father, to whose care the management of the house is intrusted. If he is not a licensed school teacher himself, he must have one under his direction. The pastoral care of the Establishment is exclusively committed to a clergyman of the Lutheran Church. Family worship, however, is conducted every morning and evening by the house-father. It is expressly directed in the statutes that this exercise should not be so long as to weary out the attention of the pupils. An Auxiliary Committee is appointed to assist the chief Committee in finding suitable situations for the pupils who have finished their education.

Children are not admitted under six nor above twelve. The sum to be paid for the board and lodging of a child is nominally 150 francs (£6) a year; but the greater portion of the applicants are admitted without payment. Thus out of 118 children who were supported during 1863, full board was paid for only twenty-three. The children stay in the house till they are confirmed, which is usually in their fifteenth or sixteenth year. Girls often continue in the house till their eighteenth year, when they are considered fit for service. A house is provided in Strasburg where such pupils as are apprenticed are boarded and lodged. Here they are supported at the expense of the Establishment, and under the superintendence of the Committee.

The members of the Committee discharge their im-

portant task gratuitously. If it is found necessary to appoint a salaried treasurer, he must give security, according to the laws of the country. The Director, or house-father, receives a salary of 1000 francs (£40), in addition to free board and lodging; the two teachers have 350 (£16) each; the overseer of the boys, 200 (£8); the housekeeper, the female teacher, and the overseer of the girls, together, 800 (£32); the cook, 205 (£8, 3s. 6d.).

The sources from which the Establishment draws its income are:—

1. The produce of the land. 2. The produce of the work of the children. 3. Sums paid for board and lodging. 4. Grants from the Government. 5. Voluntary contributions.

Every year a general meeting of the contributors is held, at which the treasurer must give an account of the state of the Establishment's funds. This meeting, however, has no right or power to deliberate or discuss any question. The Committee is absolute.

These regulations were sanctioned by the Emperor Napoleon in 1853, when the Establishment was recognised as an *Etablissement d'Utilité Publique*. While the Institution thus enjoys the protection and support of the Government, it is bound at the same time to allow full insight into the management of its affairs. Every year four copies of the budget of the ensuing year, and of the accounts of the past year, must be sent to the prefect, who sends two of the copies to the Minister of the Interior. None of the regulations can be altered without the sanction of the Government. Money bequeathed to the Insti-

tution, if not destined by the testator for a special object, must be invested in the State funds; nor may it be used for any purpose whatever without the permission of the Government.

So much for the regulation of the Reformatory. The history of its progress during nearly forty years is, like the history of all human things, a mixture of prosperity and adversity. But under both sunshine and storm the tree has grown to its present size and strength. The resolution of the Committee not to build unless there was money to pay the expense, caused a considerable delay in the finishing of the new house, the foundation stone of which was laid in 1827. The work was stopped several times for want of funds, chiefly owing to hard times. The roof was not finished till 1829; the ground floor became habitable in 1831; the first story in 1837; the second in 1839; and the whole was finished in 1841. So that the building of a house which might easily have been finished within two years, was extended over a period of not less than fourteen! And perhaps the premises would have remained unfurnished till the present time, but for two legacies, of 10,000 francs each, which were bequeathed to the Establishment. All this, of course, must have greatly hampered the Committee in the carrying on of its work. Hundreds of poor creatures must have been refused during the course of those fourteen years, for want of room. I find that in 1830 the Establishment contained no more than 34 children. This number increased in 1840, when the second story was habitable, to 54; and in 1850, after the girls' house was built, to 74. During the first twenty-five years of the existence of the Establishment 270 children

were admitted, *i.e.*, about eleven annually. During the thirteen ensuing years 237 were admitted, viz., 173 boys and 64 girls ; *i.e.*, eighteen annually. This shows a difference of seven children per annum, after the enlargement of the premises.

Now here is an interesting point for discussion between the advocates of strict financial economy and those who venture, in faith, to draw on future revenue. It must be mentioned, however, that the Committee often showed courage in facing considerable deficits, trusting on the faithful promises of the Father of the orphans. Nor was their confidence put to shame. In 1829 they had bound themselves to pay 8000 francs to the builder. When the day of payment was near at hand 1800 francs were still wanting, nor could anybody tell whence that sum was to come. But, exactly on the day which was looked forward to with such anxiety, two young persons presented the Establishment with a bequest of their grand-aunt, amounting to 1000 francs, and an unknown benefactor sent 2000 a few days later. In 1847, which was a year of hunger and dearth, the debt increased to 10,000 francs. The Committee then hit on the happy idea of establishing a box for clearing off debt. This measure met with great sympathy among the friends of the Establishment. Many a franc and napoleon d'or was put into that box which would otherwise, perhaps, have been wasted. By this means the debt was reduced to 50 per cent. in 1850. One of the members of the Committee then established an auxiliary debt-clearing box at his house. His example was followed by many friends. Once a year these little boxes were poured into the committee-box. By these

means the debt was wholly cleared off in 1853, and a surplus left of 370 francs.

The experiences of the Establishment while in difficulty have often been very touching. Once upon a time—it was in the year 1850—the Committee found itself in great difficulties. Already the debt-clearing box had been applied to for a considerable advance. Heavy accounts were to be paid, and the prospect seemed rather dismal. But one day the post brought a letter, in an unknown handwriting, from America. It came from a gentleman who was born and bred in Alsace. His late father, who was a well-to-do merchant near Strasburg, had been a staunch friend of the Establishment. Owing to disastrous circumstances he had been compelled to stop payment, and to emigrate to America, leaving his property in the hands of his creditors. A portion of that property consisted of a considerable amount of interest on a sum which the merchant had destined for the Establishment, then recently started. The Committee had received only 25 per cent. of that sum. The drafts for the rest had since that time been lying among the documents of the Establishment, deemed worthless, and almost forgotten. But the merchant could not forget them. He continually bore the obligation as a heavy burden upon his heart, and on his deathbed he transferred the debt to his son as a sad but sacred bequest. The noble young man promised to do his utmost to restore the money to the poor children of Neuhof. And he kept his word. God so blessed him s business that he was able to lay by a large sum every girls' The letter, which came to the hands of the Com- years just at the moment of its perplexity, contained a

draft for 1350 francs (£46), being the first instalment of the amount to be paid.

But the love and sympathy of the poor also contributed towards encouraging the members of the Committee. It was touching to see with what pleasure a poor widow would bring a dozen of eggs, or a poor peasant a sack of potatoes, to the Establishment. In many villages the custom was introduced of collecting gifts in kind after the harvest was over. In one village the collectors passed the hut of a day-labourer, resolving not to trouble him, as they knew the good man was as poor as he was liberally-minded; but he ran after them, with a little basket in his hand, and poured a handful or two of corn into their sack, saying, "It seems you forget me. It is true I am not rich; but as I know what poor people have to go through, I will also contribute my mite to the support of these indigent children. I should have no faith if I refused to help them."

The spirit thus expressed in these villages contrasted beautifully with the rather narrow-minded spirit of some other communities, which made the admission of a child recommended by them a condition of further sympathy.

The Establishment enjoys the support of the whole of Alsace, and especially of Protestant Strasburg. Not less than two hundred communities in Alsace, and thirty in the interior of France, send regular annual collections to the Institution, either in money or in kind. At the beginning, Strasburg showed its cordial sympathy with the work of its octogenarian citizen. When it was resolved to build the new house, young and old in the town went to work to do something for the good cause. Many

members of the Gardeners' Guild, many citizens of the town, and many country people in its neighbourhood, vied with each other in carrying stone and timber gratuitously to Neuhof; while from eight places in the vicinity eighteen heavily-laden waggons were sent with provisions for the children. Many other services of love and sympathy did the Establishment enjoy, and enjoys still, from all classes of people. For instance, it must have been a happy, merry day in the Establishment when one morning, shortly after daybreak, seventeen young ladies walked from Strasburg to Neuhof to assist the girls of the Establishment in sewing. It was before the girls' house was enlarged. There was room for only twenty-six girls, while the number of the boys was fifty-nine. Circumstances had happened which made the stock of clothes needing repair swell into a mountain. The poor girls saw no possibility of getting through with them. But no sooner was this predicament known in town than the seventeen ladies, with thimbles and needles, courageously marched to the Reformatory to help their young friends. The battle lasted all day till dusk, when the victory was won, and the fair Amazons returned to their hearths and homes, amid the cheerful and grateful applause of all the inmates of the Establishment.

This visit was such a happy combination of usefulness and pleasure, that it was afterwards twice repeated by a band of twenty young ladies.

Nor can any one be surprised at the general and cordial sympathy which this Institution enjoys, after having spent a few hours under its hospitable roof. I cannot say that one's first impression upon entering the gate is favour-

able, especially at the wet season of the year. Owing to the farmyard not being paved, you have to step over muddy places, and little pools, to be able to reach the main building; but no sooner have you entered the house than the perfect order and cleanliness which you observe makes you at once forget the irregularities without. Everything in the house, from the ground floor to the attics, is simple to the utmost, but solid, well arranged, and perfectly answering its object. The boys' and girls' houses are under one roof, but separated from each other by a wooden partition, that runs through the whole building, from the front to the back wall. All the rooms have high ceilings, and plenty of light. The dormitories, of which there are two for each sex, are well ventilated, and not overcrowded with beds. Each of them is superintended by an overseer, who sleeps in it. As I had not announced my visit, nothing could have been prepared purposely for my reception. Yet, if this had been the case, I do not know how I could have found things better than they were. The floors of the rooms were shining; the sea-grass beds, the sheets and blankets, were as clean as if they had just been received from the laundry. The kitchen is a spacious apartment, in which it was a real pleasure to see the healthy and tidy-looking girls moving about at work.

It was dinner-time when I entered the house. Mr. Theodor Krafft, the house-father, a middle-aged Alsatian, whose honest face, and quiet, composed appearance indicated a man of firm principles, great self-control, and kind feelings, at once took me down to the large dining-room, where the little folks, upwards of sixty in number, were

eagerly waiting upon him, to get the sign of attack upon the steaming soup, which, in nice-looking basins, was trying their patience. After a short prayer the sign was given, and in a moment the noise of the active spoons echoed through the apartment. The food was very palatable; had it not been rather early in the day, I should have gladly taken my dinner with these happy guests. There were some among them whose ill-looking faces betrayed the state of moral degradation they had sprung from. Some excited feelings of compassion for the state of bodily neglect which it was now the object of prayerful love to save them from. But the great majority of the children produced an agreeable impression, by their healthy looks and cheerful countenances. I needed not to ask whether they felt happy and at home. I could scarcely realise the fact that this was not a family but an assembly of poor, wretched children taken from the lowest dens in both town and country, and brought to this place to save them from the hands of the police or the brothel-keepers.

Twice a week meat is given in addition to the soup. Breakfast and supper also consist of soup, but sometimes at the latter meal they have potatoes and salad, or butter-milk. At their afternoon lunch (*Vesperbrod*), the children get 150 grammes, or one-third of a pound of bread, with fruit. Their common drink is cold water, but once a week they get wine. When engaged in fatiguing field-labour, such as at harvest time, they even get it daily. On very hot days, wine mixed with water is the common drink of the whole household. Medical advice has prescribed this beverage as a preventive against fever, to which, owing

to the vicinity of the Rhine, they are exposed. Nor is it expensive, as the vine grows in their own fields.

The order of the day does not much differ from that in other Establishments of the kind. The household rises both in summer and winter at five. The children are washed and dressed at half-past five. They then go down to the schoolrooms, where, after silent prayer, they occupy themselves in reading or writing. At half-past six they return to their bedrooms and make their beds. Afterwards breakfast is served up, and taken within twenty minutes. From seven to half-past seven the boys are free, and the girls have family-worship. The reverse takes place from half-past seven till eight. Family-worship consists of prayer, singing, and the reading of a portion of Scripture, upon which, a few questions are put to the pupils. School teaching fills the hours from eight till twelve; dinner from twelve till half-past twelve; school again from one till two. Then the elder pupils go to their industrial or agricultural work, while the younger ones remain in school till four. After having taken a piece of bread and a glass of water, they again assemble in the schoolroom at half-past four, when religious instruction is given till half-past five. Three quarters of an hour still remain before evening prayers begin. These are devoted either to singing exercises or to the perusal of some good book, which is read to the children by one of the teachers. A library, containing about 790 volumes of excellent popular literature, in both French and German, affords them plenty of opportunity of spending their leisure hours in a useful and instructive way. In summer, the time from half-past five

till a quarter past six is sometimes spent by the elder pupils in labour.

The school instruction, according to law, must be given in the French language. This, of course, is an impediment to the progress of the children, especially in the elementary classes, as but few of them upon entering the Establishment are able to speak anything but their German *patois*. It appears that, notwithstanding this, the French language never becomes the language of the house. Religious instruction is given in German; and whenever the children are addressed on any serious matter the German is also used. "It goes more home to the heart," observed Mr. Krafft.

Without degenerating into military rigour, strict discipline is maintained. The principle of abstaining entirely from corporeal punishment is not adopted. In serious cases of transgression a child receives six lashes (in no case more than six) on the palms of the hands (three on each). They are applied with a flat ruler, or, in very heinous cases, with a rod, and by the house-father himself. The elder boys are never chastised at all, except in very serious cases, when a day's imprisonment, with bread and water in a cell is inflicted. But years often elapse without its being necessary to have recourse to this measure; and it is expected that it will gradually fall into disuse altogether. Sometimes a child is punished by being allowed nothing but dry bread and water for a whole day; but even then bread is allowed till he is completely satisfied. The more gentle modes of chastisement are those which are common in all Establishments and families, such as banishment from table during

dinner, prohibition from playing, etc. Should the whole school misbehave, a favourite sport is prohibited, or an expected walk or an excursion is delayed.

That this strict discipline does not interfere with the happiness of the children, however, is evident from the ease and cheerfulness which characterises the whole family. Order appears to be loved, not maintained from fear; and the decent, discreet, and gentle tone that prevails among the children shows that a nobler and more efficient power than that of the uplifted hand and the threatened rod rules the minds and moulds the hearts of those once unhappy, but now privileged, little creatures.

IV

Results Present State of the Establishment—Statistics

It cannot of course be expected that the instruction given in the school at Neuhof should always have the same results any more than in other schools. Though the majority of the children turn out satisfactorily, and some even excite the admiration of their teachers, yet the Committee has often to speak of sad experiences, especially in the case of such as entered the Establishment at a somewhat advanced period of life. "It is evident," says one of the Annual Reports, "that a boy who does not enter the house until he has reached his twelfth year, and of whom in the entry-book the character

can be given—'Never frequented a school; used to ramble about in the streets and in the cattle-meadows,' —can have little fancy for learning, and still less ability to keep in his memory the little he may pick up at school. Picture to yourself such a boy—and we have many such in our Establishment—who comes without any inclination whatever towards learning, or a regular life; and besides is reported to be a liar, a thief, and to have a natural propensity towards every kind of wickedness. Can it be otherwise than that such a poor wretch should feel an aversion to our house, and, notwithstanding all the kindness and clemency shown to him, should keep aloof and be full of mistrust; while his shy, suspicious look enables you to glance down to the bottom of his perverted heart? No wonder, indeed, if, at the first punishment, though ever so slight, he runs away from the house, as a bird flies from its cage. Even after such a boy is brought back, and at length learns to accommodate himself to the order of the house, it often takes years of trouble before any good word finds access to his heart. We had, for instance, a most distressing experience with three boys from Strasburg in 1860. They had grown up like savages till their twelfth year. Against the desire of their relatives, and against their own will, they were recommended to us by some kind benefactors of their families. We took them in on account of their deplorable condition; but our rooms were not to their taste, and our discipline still less so. They ran away—one of them encouraged by his father—and returned to their families, with heavy complaints about the sufferings they had had to undergo; all of which, of course, were

false. Two of them, however, were brought back, but ran away again never to return, as their relatives harboured them, thus rewarding with shameful ingratitude all the good they had received from the Establishment. Many similar experiences remind us of our impotence to renew a corrupt human heart, and teach us to trust all to the merciful grace of God.

"It is not an easy matter to form a true idea of the life at our Asylum. Many think it a convent; others suppose it to be a prison. Some people, who lack the blessing of family-worship, or do not understand its value, believe that there is too much of praying and singing. Some parents, again, who want to quiet their naughty children, frighten them with the name of Neuhof. But our Establishment is neither a convent nor a prison. It is a Protestant institution, for educating poor children. Its object is grand and beautiful, but difficult; for our house lies within the reach of the wicked world, and all its pupils do not learn to flee the world while in the world. We prompt our children towards perseverance in prayer; we sow the Word of God as good seed into their hearts; we try to provide them with the learning which they will want for this life; we incite them towards obedience, order, cleanliness, and activity; we teach them a trade; and for a long time, after they have begun to eat their own bread, we continue to share their joys and sufferings; and we always help them with our advice and assistance, when it is in our power."

This, surely, is not like a prison. Nor do we receive the impression of a convent, when we read the following description of the Establishment life:

"It is often supposed that in our Establishment, and similar ones, the reverse of a family-life is to be found. But how many children find at our house what they never could find at their own! How many was it necessary to take away from what was called their family! They became fatherless at an early period of life, and were left to themselves. The public road became their home; vagabonds and idlers their family. Many a child has here learnt to honour his father and mother, whom he never learnt to honour before. Many a child which took leave of its parents with dry eyes now writes letters to them of its own accord, which express in a touching way its filial love. It is true the life in an Establishment is characterised by a certain uniformity; but where is the family-life in which most days are not alike? And surely in such a large house as this many more alternations must take place during the year than in an ordinary family-circle. The New Year's Day, with its good wishes, hymns, and watchwords, also brings along with it coffee and buns, presented by friends. The 6th of February—the Dorothea-day—reminds the girls of their kind benefactress, Mrs. Dorothea Maurer, who was the foundress of the girls' house, and secures them a happy day. After the grave Passion season is past, the returning spring leads the boys away to the forest, where, through the favour of our much-respected municipality, they are permitted to gather thirty waggonsful of dry leaves for litter in the stables, on which occasion there is plenty of opportunity for fun and sport. Easter, also, brings to our house its merry hymns and spotted eggs. The afternoon of the first of May forms for the boys a counterpart to

what the 6th of February is to the girls. It is the Philippe-Jacob-day, on which they are reminded of Father Wurtz. Then Whitsuntide comes, with its joys and its much-frequented missionary festival, in the village church. After that comes the much longed-for Annual Meeting of our Institution, when many friends visit us, and our house presents itself in truly festive attire. Shortly after this day, on the 23d of June, the anniversary of Father Wurtz's death is celebrated by the whole household at the tomb of that good man. Then the summer comes, with its various labours in garden and field; with its walks, songs, and sports; with its gymnastic exercises, bathing, and swimming. The harvest-time occupies the boys very much; but when the last cart, beautifully adorned with wreaths and flowers, is driven home, again a happy holiday is prepared for the young labourers. Then comes autumn, with its blessing in apples, pears. and wine, when every day heavy loaded waggons, carrying provisions, drive up our farmyard, and are received by the. children with loud hurrahs, and unloaded with merry noise. And well may they rejoice; for those waggons bring them the rich presents of our dear friends, the inhabitants of the rural communities of the *Bas-Rhin*, whom love has stirred to favour us with a share of the rich blessings of their fields. And when, at the close of the year, the holy Advent season approaches with its merry hymns; when the large candelabrum, with its twenty-eight lights, spreads its splendid lustre round the saloon; when the little manager and the perspective *tableau* of the worshipping Shepherds are arranged in order, and lots of beautiful toys, garments, provisions,

books, and pictures for all the inhabitants of the Establishment, and mostly presents of friends in the town, are lying on the tables, each lot being illuminated by a special light;—then the blissful, joyful, grace-bringing Christmas Eve is come, and the joy of the heart bursts out into a hundredfold cheering. Thus our family life flows on during twelve months. Some additional beams of light are also derived from the birthdays of the house-father and house-mother, and their assistants; from the visits of the ladies who form the society for making clothes for the children; from the journey of the children who have passed their church-confirmation to some charming spot in the country, such as the *Schneeberg;* and from many other things which are important to children."

I saw nothing during my visit to the Establishment that seemed to contradict this description of the happy life of its inhabitants. But the testimonies of the pupils who have left that Institution are of still greater importance than the evidence of a passing visitor. These are not few; and they breathe but one spirit,—that of gratitude and love.

It should be mentioned that in 1863 the Committee received 454 francs (£18, 3s.), partly given, partly collected, by former pupils of the Establishment. The Government also favours the Establishment with its confidence, allowing it an annual grant of 500 francs (£20), which in some years has been doubled. In 1863 the Minister of Inner Affairs sent 2000 francs (£80) for the enlargement of the girls' house. The many donations and legacies which the Establishment receives from peo-

ple of all ranks and classes sufficiently prove the high esteem it is held in by the public. The fixed capital which has in consequence sprung up has now increased to the amount of about 30,000 francs (£1200). It would have been larger than this but for sums used, with the permission of the Government, for building purposes.

At the close of the year 1863 the number of pupils residing at the Establishment was eighty-three, fifty-nine being boys and twenty-four girls. Besides these, thirty-one children,—twenty-six boys and five girls, were being supported outside the house at the expense of the Institution; so that the total number was 114 pupils. Of the boys maintained outside the house two frequented the gymnasium at Strasburg, in preparation for the university; one was being trained as a schoolmaster; and nineteen were apprenticed, either in Strasburg or at other places of Alsatia, with trades-masters or with farmers. As the apprentices' house which the Committee has rented in town only contains six beds, the greater portion of those at Strasburg were boarded out with suitable families. Out of the 118 children which the Establishment supported, ninety-five received everything gratuitously.

The total number of pupils admitted into the Establishment since its commencement in 1825 till the close of 1863, is 486. Among these there were a few children of families in affluent circumstances, who were admitted to the Establishment on account of their education being impracticable in any other school or institution.

The landed property of the establishment consists of a

large kitchen garden extending to about 9 acres, and of about 40 acres arable field. The garden is quite sufficient to provide the house with all the required vegetables, fruits, and wine during the year. In addition to the above-mentioned 40 acres, the Establishment has from 47 to 50 acres rented. The live stock consists usually of 4 horses, 7 cows, 20 pigs, 1 goat, 4 geese, 50 chickens, and 20 rabbits.

The annual balance which the Committee sent up to the Government at the close of 1863, showed a total Income of 52,989 francs, and Expenditure 57,051, the deficit being covered with borrowed money.

It thus appears that this Establishment does not compare favourably with the German Institutions of the kind as to cheapness of training. Deducting Chapter III. from the Expenditure, as being made up for by the corresponding Chapter III. of the Income; deducting further the sum of 9751 frs. 55 cents. (13 Chapter I.), as being an extraordinary outlay of the year; and deducting, finally, the sum of 452 frs. 5 cents. (5 Chap. I. of the Income), as being a contribution of the Establishment towards its own support, we find that the whole household has cost 34,474 frs. 55 cents. which were covered by gifts, donations, and interest of capital. This sum. being divided by 114, which was the number of pupils during the year, it appears that each pupil has cost the Establishment 302 frs. 23 cents., or £12, 1s. 9d. The cause of this rather high rate, it seems, must be sought in the Agricultural Department. The Establishment has only 10 hectares of land (about 90 acres) under cultivation, owing to which limited area, 8451 frs. 45 cents.

have been spent for buying provisions. On the other hand, it appears that the Agricultural Department has cost 4519 frs. 55 cents. (10 Ch. I.), whereas the net produce was only 8679 frs. 10 cents. (viz., 8227 frs. 5 cents., 1 Ch. III. of the Expenditure, and 452 frs. 5 cents., 5 Ch. I. of the Income), so that the cost was more than 50 per cent. of the net produce. This is a proportion which cannot but tell unfavourably upon the finances of the Establishment.

The balance shows a deficit of a little above 4000 frs., which in the course of this year (1864) ran up to 10,000 frs., in consequence of the lessening of contributions, owing chiefly to a temporary financial crisis at Strasburg. The Committee found itself under the necessity of specially appealing to the liberality of the benefactors of the Establishment. I was glad to learn that this effort had not been made in vain, as about the month of August the debt was reduced to 6000 frs. We shall be still more glad when, as we cordially hope, the Committee will be able to close its next annual account with a nice sum on hand with which to enter on the ensuing year. Men who so disinterestedly take upon themselves the care and trouble of the direction of such a good work, should at least be spared having to grapple with the problem, how to keep the wolf from the door of the Establishment.

THE ASYLUM FOR POOR NEGLECTED CHILDREN

(AT DÜSSELTHAL, NEAR DÜSSELDORF).



I

Count von der Recke His first Labours in the field of Christian Philanthropy

THE Düsselthal Asylum is one of the oldest, if not the oldest, establishment of this kind in Germany. Long before Wichern originated his Rauhe Haus, and Fliedner called the attention of the German Christians to the important Home Mission labours of the Deaconesses, Count Adalbert von der Recke Volmerstein had taken charge of poor neglected and abandoned children. He had begun his work as early as the year 1816. Germany then literally swarmed with vagabond families. The long succession of bloody wars, which had devastated the Continent under the iron rod of the French Conqueror, had ruined thousands of households. Vast was the multitude of widows and orphans, whose husbands and fathers had found their death through the fire of the enemy, or in the cold snows of Russia. A young generation of swindlers, thieves, highway robbers, and malefactors of every kind, was springing up in conse-

quence. The back streets, the lanes, and closes of the large towns were crowded with them. The public roads were unsafe, the prisons were over-peopled. What was to be done to stem the current of this pernicious flood nobody could tell. Countless sums in the shape of alms were every day thrown out in order to dam it up; but, instead of draining off the alarming stream somewhat, they only seemed to swell it into a deluge. It then became clear to those who had studied the great pauper question that mere alms-giving was the worst of all remedies. Little hope could be entertained as to the adult and aged individuals. The juvenile generation seemed, however, to promise all the greater success. The convicts that peopled the prisons of Prussia, in those days, amounted to upwards of 80,000. Of these one-tenth were children. Perhaps twice that number outside the prison were walking on the way to it. Indeed, it was a multitude large enough to justify the alarming cries of those who saw nothing short of total ruin impending over the whole population of Prussia.

Among the few, who, in those days, not only lamented over the plague but resolved by the power of Christ to try to cure it, was Count von der Recke. He lived at Overdyk, his estate a comparatively small house surrounded by a few acres of ground, near Düsseldorf, in Rhenish Prussia. Under the leading of his godly parents he had, from his childhood, learnt the Scriptures. His heart proved a well-prepared field to receive the seed of the Gospel. Saved by the love of Christ, already as a young man he burned with the desire of saving others. He commenced by boarding out a few children with

respectable families in the neighbourhood. He soon found that it was impossible to continue this system. The children had been too much neglected, both as to their bodies and souls, to be proper objects of ordinary domestic care and training. Instead of being morally improved by contact with the families, they threatened rather to spoil the young people and to infect them with morbid diseases. The Count soon perceived the necessity of founding a separate establishment. A few steps from his house was a building, which had been founded by his father as a seminary for school-teachers. The French Government had suppressed this institution, placing it in the category of the convents, and since that time the building had been empty. With the permission and kind co-operation of his father, the Count changed this school-house into an "Asylum for neglected Orphans and Children of Vagabonds and Convicts." To express the character of the Institution in its title, he gave it the name of *Rettungs-Anstalt* (*i. e.*, Redemption-Establishment). Since then this has become the common title of similar establishments in Germany. Aware that his own means would not be sufficient to support such an Institution, he published a circular in which he described his plan, and declared himself prepared to receive neglected children as a father, "looking up to the Almighty God, who clothes the lilies and feeds the ravens." Meanwhile the House was solemnly opened on the 19th of November 1819. It was evening. In noiseless quiet, the Count led the three children he had adopted up the little hill that separated the Asylum from his house. He himself carried the lantern that illuminated their path.

Behind followed the teacher with the bibles and hymn-books. After him came the housekeeper, carrying the bread and the ingredients for their first supper and breakfast. The children carried the fuel. "Having entered the Orphan-house," the Count relates, "we walked in solemn procession through all its apartments, singing hymns, and praising God. We set apart each room to its purpose. Then we knelt down at the footstool of Him, who had worked in us to will, and was working in us to do also, and besought that the labour should result to His glory. The teacher and housekeeper had experienced the grace of God in their own hearts, and put their hands to the work from love towards Him. So we could encourage ourselves with that word of promise: *Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.* One of our boys also had some experience of the saving love of God. His prayerful tears mingled with ours, and his groanings rose with ours to the Lord. His deep emotion about our undertaking greatly strengthened our joy and faith. It enabled us to catch an encouraging glimpse of what we might expect for the future."

The Count's circular met with a cheerful response from all Christian hearts. Apart from his highly-respected name, the object itself was a sufficient recommendation for general sympathy. His circular was an answer, as pleasing as unexpected, to the question of thousands—What is to be done to prevent the overthrow of society by the imminent Vandalism of pauperism? Contributions poured in, in large profusion. On the 20th of October 1820, eleven months after the founda-

tion of the Establishment, the number of pupils, both boys and girls, already amounted to sixty. About £397 came in from voluntary contributions, during the year 1820, while the expenditure only amounted to £298. The King favoured the Establishment with freedom of postage, and promised further support, which in later years was granted most royally. The active Count also travelled through the country to raise Sunday-schools in the various towns and villages. He organised Scripture-reading meetings at several places, promoted the introduction of missionary labours into the prisons, and raised a general interest in Home Mission work, which prepared the way for such men as Fliedner and Wichern.

Indeed it was a great blessing to Prussia that, at that critical period, a young man who combined with the nobility of his rank the courage of a living faith, and the glow of a loving heart, was raised up to be pioneer in such a great work.

II.

The Purchase and Enlargement of Düsselthal.

THE School-house at Overdyk soon became too small. In 1822 the pupils already numbered 130, both boys and girls. It was next to impossible to keep both sexes duly separated in so narrow a space. Already recourse was had to boarding out some of the girls with families in the neighbourhood; but this experiment turned out a failure.

Besides, a sufficient supply of drinkable water could not be obtained at Overdyk. The necessity of looking out for a more suitable and healthy locality was keenly felt.

At two miles' distance from Overdyk, and about one mile from the town of Düsseldorf, lay an old Abbey, called Düsselthal, which appeared in many respects suitable. It was situated in one of the healthiest districts of the vicinity, surrounded by fertile fields and beautiful meadows, which were watered by the river Dussel. The premises, though neither tastefully nor regularly built, were yet strong. They were not so spacious as could have been desired, but there was sufficient room for enlargement. The Abbey, with its grounds, was on sale for about £7700. This was a sum beyond the means of the Count, who though in affluent circumstances, did not belong to the wealthiest portion of the Prussian nobility. But quite unexpectedly a noble lady presented the Establishment with £545. Many other gifts followed. Capital was borrowed, and a mortgage put on the premises, and thus the Abbey was purchased. On the 19th of June 1822, the Count led twenty-four boys and twenty girls to the new place. His father took charge of the hundred and odd pupils, that remained in the old building. He cared for them with a father's love, till the Divine Master called his gray-headed servant home. After his death his younger children continued the good work, till, in later years, the Institution at Overdyk was combined with that at Düsselthal.

The Count's attention had some time before been drawn to the distressing condition of the Jews. He

loved that old people of God. He believed in the promises of Scripture, which pointed at their future conversion to their now-rejected Messiah. He rejoiced at the prospect of that glorious period when their fulness would prove the riches of the Gentiles, and the receiving of them be as life from the dead. Outside the gate, but within the precincts of the Abbey, were two separate little houses which the Count thought capable of affording fit accommodation for a colony of Jews. He knew a few who had already acquired some knowledge of the Gospel, and were anxious to obtain further instruction. He knew others, who, cast out by their tribe because of their confession, were destitute of any shelter or means of support. He gathered them to Düsselthal, and allowed them to begin a colony life under the direction of an able teacher. While being instructed in the knowledge of the Gospel they were enabled to learn some trade. This plan met with great sympathy among the friends of Jewish missions, especially in Great Britain. From 1822 to 1828, no fewer than 105 adult proselytes were received into the colony. They were chiefly supported from British contributions, which, during that period, amounted to £1692. The expenditure, however, was £2034. It seems that the same difficulties were experienced here as at many other places with adult Jewish proselytes. Many of them turned out shrewd impostors; and the good Count, whose loving heart believed everything, and hoped everything, could easily be imposed upon. Many also proved unsteady, unsettled, volatile characters, unfit for any regular work or trade. Out of the above-mentioned 105

only 21 could be admitted to baptism. It was then resolved upon to change the colony into an Asylum for Jewish children.

Meanwhile it soon became evident that the premises of the Abbey were too small to contain the increasing number of children, and an enlargement was proposed, and contributions flowed in. In a letter, the Count says:—"A woman came to me at nine o'clock, bringing two dollars (six shillings), together with some pieces of handiwork, from an unknown giver. That was the first little stone to the building of faith. At ten o'clock, a servant of the kind Princess Frederic, came with a present of fifty dollars (£7, 10s.), and a note, saying, in the kindest manner, that she wanted to give me a pleasant surprise to-day; and therefore, knowing that she could not give me a greater pleasure than remembering my little ones, sent me the enclosed donation."

So the foundation-stone was laid, and the building of the Girls' house was proceeded with in the course of 1823. This caused the first deficit in the accounts of the Establishment to the amount of £494.

III.

Further History of the Establishment till the Count's departure in 1847.

ON the 4th December, 1824, the Count received a letter from King Frederic William III., in which His Majesty informed him that he was disposed to take £2367 of the

debt to his charge, and to leave it as a mortgage without interest on the Establishment as long as it would be used as an asylum for indigent neglected children. This deed of royal munificence saved the Count an annual outlay of £118. At the same time a gift of £15 came in from the Crown Prince, afterwards King Frederic William IV.: a great encouragement to the good Count. Still the year closed with a deficit of £92.

Nothing now was left untried by the Count's friends to strengthen his hands. Pastor Sander, a clergyman of Elberfeld, started a religious journal, called the 'Menschenfreund' (the Friend of Man), for the benefit of the Institution. This well-written periodical, which had a sale of many thousands of copies largely spread throughout the country, is still in existence, and is regarded as a source of spiritual blessing in many a hut and cottage. Pastor Krummacher, of Bremen, wrote that well-known excellent little book, called *Das Taubchen* (the Little Dove), the profit of which went wholly to the Düsselthal Asylum. This is one of those standard popular little Christian books which, like Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, stand above the fluctuations of taste and the changes of the times, and will long continue to be read by the people. The Count, thus encouraged by the kind sympathy of the chief leaders of the Church, resolved to begin a second enlargement of his premises. The Boys' house had now become too small. Besides, its situation proved adverse to the cleanliness of the other buildings. Its apartments also were too narrow and close, which was conceived to be the chief cause of the ague that continuously visited the poor boys. The Count felt that he

could not with a good conscience delay the building of a new Boys' house. He went to Elberfeld, the residence of the wealthy manufacturers of the lovely Wupperthal, to begin a collection in person. To his great joy he met everywhere with open hearts and hands. On the second day his collection amounted to £300, and before the week was closed he found himself justified in beginning the important addition. So the building was proceeded with in 1826. It is true the contributions were not sufficient to cover the expense; but the deficit was made up by a mortgage, the Count, too, contributing a considerable sum from his own funds.

Thus the Institution gradually increased. It now lodged about 200 children, including those of Overdyk, as well as the teachers, tradesmasters, servants, and labourers. It was quite a small village--a colony. There were, besides the dwelling-houses, two large schoolrooms; a prayer meeting room, in which a clergyman especially appointed for the Establishment conducted service; a printing-office, at which the abovementioned periodical, a juvenile magazine, and many other little religious books were printed; a bookbinding-office; a shoemaker's, a tailor's, and a joiner's shop; a flower and bone mill; a bakery; a smithy; an *eau de Cologne* distillery; a large flower and kitchen garden; and a farmhouse. This last was occupied by the steward of the Establishment, who had to care for the cultivation of some hundred acres of arable land, for the cattle and the dairy, and for the sale of the crops which were not taken into consumption. And, as if all this were not sufficient to fill up one man's life with an abundance of

labour, a house was also provided for young girls, who, under the superintendence of a noble Christian lady, were trained as deaconesses. Still the Count's energy continued as strong as ever. He did not even shrink from increasing the territory of the Establishment by a considerable purchase of land. Adjacent to the Düsselthal grounds was a little estate called *Zoppenbrück.* It contained a large house with about 150 acres of land. He bought it in 1838 for £2390, though not knowing at the time how he was to pay it. But here again Providence came to his assistance. Unexpectedly a sum of his own of £300 which he had lent out was repaid to him. He was then at the watering-place of Ems. He was in great perplexity, as the day of payment was nearly approaching. The depressed state of his spirits formed a painful contrast with the display of wealth and luxury that surrounded him at this gay place. One day he happened to meet with the Empress of Russia. A friendly conversation ensued, in which he acquainted her with his work and present difficulties. Her Majesty favoured him with 100 ducats (£40), and shortly after sent him another donation of 2000 ducats (£800). Thus nearly the whole of the required sum was in his hands, and with the addition of a mortgage the full amount could be paid down in due time.

After a labour of nearly thirty years, the Count's health broke down. And no wonder. He had no partners who bore the weight of the burden along with him; he had no committee by his side to share his cares and liabilities. The immense concern rested solely upon the shoulders of one man: it might have been heavy

enough for ten. He felt compelled to transfer the work to stronger hands than his. Friends came to his assistance, among whom was the late King Frederic William IV. A Board was formed of twelve Curators, chiefly living in Düsseldorf and the vicinity, of which the Count was appointed as honorary president. An excellent director was found in the person of Mr. Georgi, who was the first teacher at the Royal Seminary for School-teachers at Moers; and on the 18th of November, 1847, the whole concern, including *Overdyk, Düsselthal*, and *Zoppenbrück*, was solemnly transferred to the Board of Curators. Statutes and regulations were drawn up for the further management of affairs. The new director and his family took possession of the appartments appointed for their dwelling. The Count repaired to his estate in one of the eastern provinces of the kingdom.

And now the statistics. Owing to the Count's weak state of health, the Annual Reports of 1846 and 1847 were never published. From the Report of 1845, it appears that since the commencement of the work 1012 children were taken into the Establishment, of whom 836 were restored to society.

On the day of conveyance the Establishment's property consisted of—

1. Eleven hundred acres of land.
2. The required premises and furniture.
3. A mill.
4. A bookshop, printing-office, bookbinding-office, and two periodicals.
5. A trade in *eau de Cologne*, with a shop.

6. A considerable stock of cattle.
7. The annual stipends for boarding the children to the amount of £163.
8. The Government's permission of holding an annual collection in the churches and at the houses, averaging about £750.

On the other hand the debt amounted to not less than £9000. Of this sum, however, nearly the half was without interest, viz., £2592 from the king, £300 from Councillor Bethmann Holweg, and £1500 from the Count. The interest of the rest required an annual expenditure of £166. Then about 250 children were to be supported and a large number of teachers and servants were to be salaried, and this in 1850 amounted to an outlay of £1860.

It was under such circumstances that Mr. Georgi addressed himself to the arduous task of controlling and superintending this important work. The following chapters will show in how far that excellent man succeeded.

IV.

A Glance at the Life of Mr. Georgi

AT the critical moment when a cart, too heavily loaded at the top, is about to tilt over, it seldom happens that a man is found strong enough to keep it upright, and skilful enough to drive it on in safety. Such a privilege,



CHI ISTIAN FR EDRICH (EOI C I

however, Providence has vouchsafed to the Düsselthal establishment, by giving it a director like Mr. Georgi.

Christian Frederic Georgi, who superintended the Asylum from 1847 till his death in 1861, was one of those servants of God who in the school of suffering are trained for the work which their heavenly Master has for them to do. He was born in the year 1801 at Langensalza, a pretty town of Thuringia. This remote district of Prussia, secluded from the great bustling noisy world, in the middle of the Harz and Thuringia mountains, is inhabited by an agricultural population which enjoys at once the privileges of modern civilization and the charms of a simple patriarchal life. Mr. Georgi was born from parents who earned their humble daily bread partly by farming, partly by handicraft. As a child he had to drink the bitter cup of adversity. His father died when he was very young. On one occasion—it was in the days of French wars—a Russian soldier was just about to kill him, when his elder brother rushed between the savage and his victim and saved the boy from death by the sword. At another time the parental house was upset by a fearful inundation when he had been left alone in the building. He had barely time to jump on a press which was fastened to the wall of the neighbouring house. Already the water rose up to his knees, when his friends, who thought he had been drowned, discovered his fearful position. A hole was cut in the wall, and thus the lad was saved before the flood had reached his lips. Nor could the keen observer have failed to discover that there was something more than ordinary in the lad. With a clear understanding and an extraordinarily cor-

rect judgment he combined a zeal and perseverance which baffled every obstacle. Reading and studying were his delight. How greatly would he have rejoiced had his position permitted his training for the pulpit! His circumstances, however, scarcely allowed him to attend the Lyceum of the town,—a school, a shade or two higher than the common popular school. Here, however, he tried to prepare himself for the profession of a schoolmaster. An elder sister had taken him into her house after his father's death. Her husband's circumstances were such that a special room could not be afforded for the boy; he was not even permitted to have a candle for himself. To enable her brother to learn his lessons the good woman continued spinning her thread till the dead of night, in order that he might avail himself of the light of her lamp. Thus encouraged by love and stimulated by ambition, the young man overcame every difficulty and passed a fair examination. He obtained a situation as a schoolmaster in a small village. His salary, inclusive of all emoluments, was £18, 15s. a year. His dwelling was the half of the house of his predecessor, who was still alive. This man was a crotchety morose character, who tried to throw as many obstacles in the way of his young successor as he could. In addition to such outward trials, our young schoolmaster suffered from a bodily complaint, which often would deprive his soul of all happy thoughts; and this disease, like a messenger of Satan, persecuted him till his last breath. Notwithstanding these adversities, he resolved to marry at his twentieth year. Nor was this resolution the result of mere youthful impulse. Her whom he loved he had

known from her childhood, and she had known him. Trained like him in the school of suffering, this excellent woman had grown up under hard labour. She combined much common sense and a tender heart with an iron will and an extraordinary amount of economical domestic skill. I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of this happy couple shortly before their departure to Düsselthal. I never saw two persons united by the ties of matrimony who seemed more perfectly suited to each other.

His talents and ability as a schoolmaster soon gained him the approbation and admiration of his superiors. He was promoted from one degree to another till the second class of the girls' school was committed to his charge. This school was frequented by the daughters of the first families of the town. He entered this new sphere of labour just at the time when with him faith had carried the victory over his philosophy after a severe struggle, for he had been in the meeting of Hegel and the rationalists, his pupils could not fail to experience the influence of this change. They enthusiastically received the great spiritual truths which their new teacher mixed with his instruction. They came home with ideas and principles which strangely contrasted with the spirit that was prevailing in their families. They came forward with extraordinary suggestions to the effect that perhaps their parents might please God by asking a blessing at dinner, by reading the Bible, and by introducing family worship. Did anybody ever hear anything like this? The whole of the aristocracy were set astir; their indignation also infected the lower class. Even in the public-

houses Mr. Georgi's name was mentioned with scorn and derision. The Board of Schools was at a loss what to do. To dismiss him was impossible. Nor indeed was this desirable, as he was undoubtedly a first-rate teacher.

It so happened that at this time the place of first teacher at the highest boys' school became vacant. Hitherto it had always been occupied by a person of learning, whether a philologer or a theologian. The late teacher had dreadfully neglected that school. The boys were quite unmanageable. They even had proceeded so far as to beat their teacher. It was resolved upon to favour Mr. Georgi with this honourable situation. Such was the discipline which prevailed, that the boys even kept orderly when Mr. Georgi had to leave them for a few minutes. "If any one," says his biographer, "wants to know the power which enabled him to accomplish such an arduous task, I must point him to Mr. Georgi's closet. Thither he used to repair to obtain that extraordinary strength in the midst of his manifold bodily infirmities and sufferings."

Such a man could not long remain unnoticed by the friends of Christian popular education. The good report that went out from him was confirmed by the favourable impression which his writings produced; for every year Mr. Georgi used to write a book to earn a few thalers, else he could not have taken a trip into the country with his wife during the holidays. His schoolmaster's salary did not allow such expenditure. Among these writings, his *Holy History of the Old Testament*, published in two volumes, in 1840, by F. and A. Perthes, at Hamburg, stood foremost. It so much excited the admiration of

the celebrated Mr. Zahn, director of the Royal Seminary at Moers, in Rhenish Prussia, that this learned and ingenious pedagogue left no stone unturned till Mr. Georgi was by his side as first teacher, or inspector of the seminary. Here Mr. Georgi got into a new atmosphere, which refreshed his soul as the dew of heaven refreshes the parched land. While at Langensalza and its environs, only a few individuals sympathised with his religious spirit: in Rhenish Prussia, and especially in the so highly blessed Wupperthal, Christian life met him with all its warmth and sprightliness. Here, for the first time in his life, he witnessed a public missionary meeting; a thing quite unknown in Thuringia in those days. Here he saw many charitable and philanthropic Christian institutions, of which he scarcely had a conception. Thus he spent three happy years by the side of his friend, Mr. Zahn, whose conversation nobody could enjoy without learning to see what was best to be done and how to do it.

It was about this time that Count von der Recke found himself under the necessity of relieving himself from the care of his Institution. For two years he had felt that necessity; but the impossibility of finding a suitable successor had compelled him to continue struggling on. Nor was it to be wondered at that nobody felt disposed to thrust his shoulders under that heavy weight. No sooner, however, had Mr. and Mrs. Georgi become known to the population of Rhenish Prussia, than the Count and his friends were convinced that the long sought-for people were found. Mr. and Mrs. Georgi loved Düsselthal. The excellent object of the Institu-

tion had all the sympathy of their souls. But the great difficulties connected with its present condition made them shrink back. Few of their friends had the courage to give them advice in the matter. They at first declined, but the Count could not let them go. Half a year elapsed in correspondence. At length the Government came between. There was no doubt that Mr. Georgi was the man for the thing. The Upper President of the Province urgently entreated him to save the good Düsselthal work from utter ruin. In case of urgent predicaments, State support was promised. A regular salary was guaranteed. A Board of Curators was appointed, and, as to the liabilities of the concern, Mr. Georgi was guarded against any responsibility whatever.

So the way was made as smooth as possible. Mr. Georgi and his excellent wife accepted the call. "Dusselthal is saved," said a friend; "but the dear Georgis will pay for it with their lives."

V

Mr Georgi's Vork and Struggles.

MR. GEORGI commenced his work with courage and energy. The number of pupils was 120. This was not an extraordinarily large number; but Mr. Georgi was quite alarmed at examining the intellectual and moral condition of this little population. Their education had sunk to a very low pitch during the last two years. It

was next to impossible to control them well with comparatively so few helping hands as were at disposal. But the financial state of the Establishment did not admit of an increase of functionaries as yet. Besides, scarcely anybody was to be got fit for the work. Poor Mr. and Mrs. Georgi soon stood quite perplexed in the midst of that whirl of confusion. During the Count's indisposition, gross abuses had crept into every branch of administration. There was a lack of nearly everything, and scarcely a farthing in the box. Mr. Georgi awoke many a morning without knowing what to feed the children with, or how to meet unavoidable obligations that were expected during the day. Then the good, conscientious couple, with the ideal of a perfect, all-accomplished household before their eyes, would often almost sink down in despondency upon experiencing how little they were prepared to control such a confusion. Many an evening they would sit down together in distress, unburdening their hearts to each other in sighs and tears. "Certainly," they would say, "the Lord has been mistaken in choosing us! We shall never be the right people for such a gigantic work!"

Within twelve months the Establishment was reduced to perfect order. All the abuses were abolished, and the household was kept with such a saving skill, that at the close of the second year the annual interest to be paid for borrowed capital was not only lessened by £20, but a balance was left of £699. A capital of £526, which was due next year, could be cleared off. The number of children had, during those two years, increased from 120 to 170; and the number of functionaries was twice as

large as that with which Mr. Georgi commenced the work two years ago.

This was as encouraging for Mr. Georgi as it was wonderful in the eyes of the public. But it seemed that the sunshine of prosperity could not brighten his path, except for a short time. It was on the 7th June, 1851, at 11 o'clock A.M., that he was engaged in writing a little Christmas book for the children, when the the cry, "Fire! fire!" roused him from his meditations. A building, called the "prelature," which contained the chief offices of the Institution, was in a blaze. The clocks were tolled; seven engines from Düsseldorf and the neighbouring villages soon rushed in; the boys were ranged in a double row to hand up the pails; a military band was sent by the Government for assistance; some portions of the walls were pulled down; some parts of the roof were broken up. All in vain. Within six hours the whole building, with the girls' house, was a prey to the all-devouring element. The main building and the boys' house were just beginning to burn, when the wind fortunately turned, and thus a part of the building was saved from utter ruin. Meanwhile Mrs. Fliedner drove up from Kaiserswerth to carry off the invalid children. Those whom she could not take were transferred to Düsseldorf by a friend. Friends and neighbours took a great number of the girls into their houses. Some friends at Düsseldorf provided the Establishment with cold and hot meals during the first days after the disaster. Thus Christian love poured oil into the wound, the after pains of which, however, proved very aching. The destroyed premises were insured for £1560, but a large sum was required besides

to rebuild the whole. This increased the debt of the Establishment to a considerable extent. But Mr. Georgi did not allow his courage to sink. Circulars and pamphlets were spread; friends were stirred to collect; Mr. Georgi visited the influential individuals in person; clergymen were requested to bring the matter before their flocks. In short, before three years elapsed, the new buildings not only graced the large square yard of the Institution, but the whole of the debt, contracted in consequence, was cleared off to the last farthing; and the year closed with a balance of £700 cash in hand, notwithstanding that the population of the Establishment had increased to above 300 individuals.

This calamity was scarcely overcome, when another sad accident occurred. A tremendous hailstorm destroyed the harvest of the year in one single night. Mr. Georgi says, "20 acres of wheat, 68 of buckwheat, 14 of barley, 95 of oats, were totally destroyed and smitten into the soil. Not one stalk was visible, only a thistle here and there. The food for the cattle and nearly all our vegetable provision for the winter, were lost. The fruit-trees in the gardens were mourning, deprived of the greater part of their fruits. Twelve hundred and fifty-eight panes were destroyed. The pieces of ice were so large that more than 2000 tiles were smashed to pieces. The rain pouring in through the broken roof, dissolved the ceilings of the rooms at many places. Our damage amounted to 6354 thalers (£953, 6s.). Hundreds of smaller and larger birds were lying killed in our gardens and ponds. A great owl was found with its prey, a mouse, in its beak. With all the misery we were witnessing, we could not be

thankful enough for the circumstance that the calamity had happened in the night. If it had struck our children in the fields, lives would undoubtedly have been lost. We have experienced this time that 'it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.' But we also were permitted to experience what a child of God may feel in the midst of distress."

Mr. Georgi was contrite, submissive, and his contrite submission under the chastising hand of God did not degenerate into a merely passive state of mind. Immediately all hands were put to work to recover the damage as quick as possible; £167, 8s. were paid back by the insurance company. Mr. Georgi's friends at Bremen sent in £68; the Düsseldorf Government granted £30; from Basle £12, 11s. came in, and £18 from Frankfurt-on-the-Maine, and £150 from other places; while Mr. Georgi travelled to Barmen and Elberfeld, and before the year drew to its close 5000 thalers (£750) were recovered. Still £204 were wanting. "Now hard days came on," Mr. Georgi writes. "I had to pay £80, 8s. to buy 90 bushels of rye and 25 bushels of wheat, to sow our fields with. I wanted every week £20, 5s. for bread and porridge. I had to pay £18, 8s. for fuel for baking; £37, 4s. for oats, barley, and beans; £22, 1s. for potatoes; £92, 14s. for oil. With the exception of the wood and the oil, all these articles used in other years to be provided from our own produce. It seemed quite impossible to get through the winter; yet we *got* through. The Lord is great, and His name is great."

That same year the account of the Establishment closed with £1930 cash in hand, and the debt, with

interest, which in 1847 amounted to about £4000, was diminished to £2273!

Such figures are something more than mere dry statistics. They show what a good Christian man, in spite of the most trying disasters, may attain by combining praying and working in due proportion.

But the greatest calamity that ever befel that good man was still in store. His excellent wife, who, like a heroine, had fought the noble battle by his side, died in 1858. Her strength at last broke down under the weight of her labour. Her last breath was a prayer for the children, and those who had to care for them. Her death was indeed a heavy blow for poor Mr. Georgi. Within three years he followed his beloved companion to her heavenly dwelling. He died in peace on the 6th of February 1861, in the sixty-first year of his useful and active life.

He left the Establishment in a state which, while it evinced the self-sacrificing faithfulness he had conducted the affairs of the Establishment with, at the same time excited the admiration of all who were able to compare the present with the past. Mr. Georgi's death caused great perplexity to the curators. Where could they find the person who was able and willing to take that man's place! Two years and a half elapsed before the Board found a successor in the Rev. Mr. Imhäusser, who entered on his important office in November, 1863. During the interval the management of the Establishment was continued under the temporary superintendence of the Rev. Mr. W. Georgi, the deceased's eldest son, who, since 1859, had stood by his father's side in his character as

clergyman of the Institution. I visited Düsselthal in January, 1863. The Rev. Director *ad interim* and his consort were so kind as to guide me through the whole of the Establishment, and to favour me with the desired particulars relating to its history, its organisation, and the spirit in which the education of its youthful population was being conducted. I now will, in my turn, take my reader by the hand and try to impart to him the impressions received from what I saw and heard on my visit to that interesting Asylum.

VI

A Visit to the Three Establishments.

It is not a long way from the Düsseldorf Railway Station to Düsselthal. We may walk it at our ease in half an hour's time. We follow the beautiful avenue that fringes the southern part of the town, and, after having crossed the railway, we proceed in an easterly direction. We find ourselves on a plain covered with arable land. No hill, no grove is visible. Only at a mile's distance directly before us we notice the tops of trees overshadowing a cluster of houses. That is Düsselthal. The way that leads up to it through the field is rather monotonous, and very sandy. The acres to left and right are Düsselthal property. Having approached to within a stone-throw from the place, we notice that our path expands into a broad, tolerably well-paved carriage-road. It leads

through a little group of four white-plastered, two-storied houses, two on each side of the road; at a small distance we observe the gate of the Establishment, which is encircled by a stone wall.

These four houses outside the gate were at the time of Count von der Recke's directorship the abode of the Jewish proselytes. They now form a portion of the Boys'



Approach to Düsselthal.

Establishment. The first building to the left is occupied by fifteen boys, under the superintendence of a young man whose title is "Brother." A portion of this building is also occupied by the third Teacher of the Establishment, who has the supervision of these four boys' families outside the gate. Opposite this house, to the right, is the dwelling of the Steward and his family. The two other houses contain three boys' families, each under the con-

trol of a Brother. The inside of these family houses is simple, but answers the purpose. There is a dining-room, a room for the Brother, a washing-room, a dormitory, etc. A little garden, adorned with an arbour, graces the front of each house, and old and young fruit trees offer their refreshing dainties in summer

The gate—which bears the inscription, *I will look to*



The Gate

him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word—is an indifferent building, and so are the two houses that form its wings The whole aspect of the outside of this place shows that it was once a convent Owing to the rather dull, prison like impression which we receive before entering, we are the more agreeably surprised when we have got in. We find ourselves, as it were, in a small village, fenced in on one side by the river, the Düssel, and on its three other sides by a stone wall

Within this spacious enclosure we observe the various buildings that form the Establishment, an extensive fruit and kitchen garden, and fifty acres of arable land. The gate through which we have entered is opposite to a row of houses. Between the gate and those houses is a large square yard, overshaded by about fifty trees. This is the excellent playground for the boys. On the left wing of



The Düsselthal Establishment.

that row of houses a three-storied building lifts its roof above the rest. Some of its rooms are occupied by boys' families, some by the bookbinder, some by the shoemaker, etc. A portion of the second story used to be the dwelling of the late Mr. Georgi. The third story contains the dwelling-rooms of the first and second teachers, an infirmary and bed-rooms, and the apartments for the tailoring business. The other buildings contain the

seminary for schoolmasters, school-rooms, dining-rooms, kitchen, bakery, &c. The last one, on the left, is the "female servants' establishment." This house is occupied by such girls as, in consequence of their age, have left the asylum, but still want some further education to be fit for domestic service. It is also a receiving-place for such pupils as are sent back by their mistresses be-



The Girls House

cause of weakness or want of ability. The Establishment does not allow pupils who have once left to return But if some should lose their situation without their own fault, and not be able to find a new one at once, this house offers them a *pied à terre* till a new situation is provided.

We pass through a gate, and find ourselves at the entrance of a second square yard, enclosed by a wall

This is the Girls' Establishment, which is entirely sepa-

rated from the boys' house. We notice a two-storied building, which forms a right angle with another one. Before it lies a spacious play-yard, which we cross in order to enter the beautiful orchard and flower-garden. This lovely spot occupies about 2½ acres of ground. Here is the dwelling of five girls' families, which are superintended by five "sisters" and three assistant-sisters. In summer-time the girls are occupied in the garden or in the fields outside the Establishment; in winter they keep in doors, engaged in knitting, sewing, washing, etc. Each family has its own apartments, and keeps its own household strictly separated from that of the neighbouring one. At school, however, and in their sports, the children of the different families mix together.

Passing through the gate again, and re-entering the first square, we observe to the right the Farming Establishment. Its apartments afford accommodation for the farmer of the Institution and his family, two cowherds, one shepherd, five labourers, and their families. The building presents the form of a horseshoe. To right and left are the barns and stables for about 36 cows and oxen, 25 pigs, 8 horses, 3 donkeys, and about 250 sheep. The second floors are the stores for the produce of about 1300 acres of land.

Crossing the square and walking towards the south we arrive at the chapel, which owes its existence to the fire of 1851. Before that time divine service was held in a hall on the ground-floor of the main building. This place was very close and damp. It caused many an attendant to return with the ague. That circumstance caused the building of a regular chapel to be agreed to,

and it was solemnly opened on the 3d of August, 1853. Steps were then taken to get Dusselthal acknowledged as a parish of the National Church. These proceedings were crowned with the approbation of the Government in 1858, and the Rev. W. Georgi was appointed as its first clergyman, with an annual Government grant of £45 towards his salary



The Chapel

This extensive place is inhabited by 270 individuals, of whom about 100 are adult persons, including 30 young men who are being trained as schoolmasters at the seminary.

We now leave Dusselthal, and walking up through the fields towards the south, we pay a visit to the mother-asylum Overdyk, with which Count von der Recke commenced his good work in 1819 The nice two-storied

house, with its pretty little belfry, which we see peeping out through a little grove of high poplars, is not that old school house which the Count obtained from his father for the purpose. This building was burned down in 1852, and the calamity was all the more distressing, since it was caused by the reckless malignity of one of the pupils



Overdyk

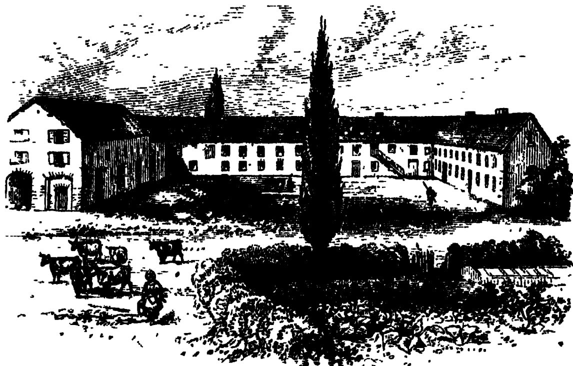
We find this charming place peopled by thirty four boys There are no girls here A "Brother" from Dusselthal stands at the head of the whole household Another Dusselthal Brother assists him as a school master The boys are divided into two separate families, of which the two mentioned "Brothers" are the heads There is also a little farming connected with this place Two cows provide it with butter and milk A couple of

pigs are being fattened for the winter. During the summer the boys work in the gardens and the surrounding fields. Their school-time then only lasts three hours: in winter four. The rest of the time is spent in useful work, such as repairing clothes, darning stockings, etc. When about to learn a trade the boys are sent up to Düsselthal.

On returning to Düsselthal we may call at Zoppenbrück, its second auxiliary asylum. It is a little larger than Overdyk, but very much like it. It lodges two boys' families, one of twenty-two, another of twenty-three boys, and one girls' family of fifteen. A school-teacher who got his training at the Düsselthal seminary is the house-father of this place, and its schoolmaster at the same time. Two "Brothers" and a "Sister" assist him as heads of the three families.

I have called this Establishment a small village; and after our visit to the three places I think my readers will not accuse me of exaggeration. We find a population united here of nearly 400 individuals, of whom 272 are children. These are divided into nineteen families, thirteen being boys' and six girls' families. There is scarcely any trade for common daily use which is not represented. With the exception of your hat, you may get every piece of dress made or mended here. With the exception of wine and confections, you may obtain every ingredient of a good hearty breakfast or dinner. If you want to read books, here is a book-shop. If you want to publish books, here is a printing-press. Nice walks, even within the walls of the Establishment, present plenty of opportunity for bodily exercise.

A company of "Brothers" and "Sisters," excellent, kind-hearted people, who have devoted body and soul to the good work, afford an abundant choice of conversation for the heart. A band of thirty to forty young men, who are studying all the branches of popular science and general information, offers a wide range for instructive intercourse and interesting entertainment. Their quartets



The Farm House.

and choruses are excellent; their performances on the piano, the organ, and the violin, are worth hearing. A minister of the Gospel who as a pastor lives among this happy flock, cares for the important concerns of their souls. A nice chapel every Lord's day unites the members of this numerous family under the blessed sound of the Gospel, at the footstool of Grace. Indeed, with a view only to social intercourse and enjoyment Düsselthal

might be looked at as a place where one might wish to live and to die, secluded from the unhappy world without, and thankful for the benefits of the happy world within.

Though enclosed with a wall like a convent, Dusselthal is not more unlike anything than a convent. The world constantly flows in and out, as the tide of the great ocean flows in and out the estuary. Education for high ends, and with no idea of separation from society at large, is the result here aimed at. A glance at the daily life at Dusselthal, as it may be known from Mr. Georgi's reports and experiences, will show that the same fluctuations of hope and fear, of joy and distress, which agitate the world abroad, move this little world within, and that the same awful battle between the good and the evil, which splits the human race into two armies, is also fought out in this small society on the bank of the Dussel.

VII

Organisation of the Establishment—Education and Instruction of the Children

THE Asylum being a thoroughly Protestant Institution, Roman Catholic children are not accepted, unless their parents or tutors expressly declare that they want them to be trained in the Protestant creed. The children remain in the house till they are confirmed as members of the Church, *i. e.*, till they have reached their sixteenth or seventeenth year. The younger ones are usually

taken to Overdyk and Zoppenbrück. They finish their education at Düsselthal. As it has been found that the support of a child costs the Institution 50 thalers (£7, 10s.) a year, the annual stipend for boarding is fixed at 40 thalers (£6) for the older, and 25 thalers (£3, 15s.) for the younger ones. Besides, there are fifty "free places" for children who pay nothing. They are at the disposal of such individuals or commonalities as have shown a more than ordinary interest in the Institution.

The division of the day is as follows:—In summer the household rises at 4.30: in winter at 5.30. While the children are dressing, the beds are examined and aired: a short prayer is offered up, and the whole band walks down to the school, which in summer commences at 5, in winter at 6: worship at 7. The children go up to the dormitories at 7.15, to make their beds, under the superintendence of an assistant Brother. Breakfast at 7.30; school from 8 to 10; labour from 10 to 12, mostly in the fields; dinner 12 to 12.30. After half an hour's sporting, labour commences again till four; playtime till 5; school 5 to 7; supper at 7. The children repair to the school-room to learn their lessons till the clock calls them to their beds at 9.

The condition in which these children enter the Establishment is, with only a few exceptions, very distressing. By far the greater portion of them are in the most wretched state as to the body; their blood is poisoned; scrofulous diseases, consumption, nervous debility are their usual complaints. They have lived from their childhood like savages, in stables, in barns, in holes dug into the ground. Many of them know nothing of the

use of a fork or spoon. Some of them never slept on a bed, never sat on a chair. A healthy girl of twelve was brought to the Establishment one day, who did not know how to walk up and down a staircase. Sin, in all its horrible ramifications, both secret and public, is spread through this deplorable company. Theft, falsehood, perjury, hypocrisy, perfidy, impudence, rank foremost in the list of their vices. Most of them are stimulated by an all but irresistible impulse towards vagabondism. When the first rays of the vernal sun illuminates the fields, a restlessness is noticeable among them, similar to the tumultuous stir in the cages of a zoological garden at feeding-time. Of religion they know scarcely anything. They can neither read nor write, neither pray nor say a hymn. One boy of eighteen, and a girl of seventeen, appeared never to have heard of a Saviour.

To be able, with God's help, to rescue these juveniles from perdition, and to restore them as useful members to society, Mr. Georgi was convinced that a division into separate families, after the pattern of the Rauhe Haus was indispensable. This brought him into the necessity of doubling the number of "overseers." He changed their title into that of "Brothers" and "Sisters." He wanted to give the children the impression of being members of a family, not denizens of a prison. He was very particular in examining the individuals to whom he intrusted the care of the families. None of them was appointed without having been under trial for at least a couple of months. As far as human judgment went he secured to the children such young men and women as had truly given their hearts to Christ and devoted them-

selves body and soul to His service. To scare those whose religion only consisted in cant and religious phrases, he made the way of living as plain as possible, put it under the strictest control and connected it with constant labour. Persons who wanted to eat, to drink, to sleep, to pray and to sing, but not to work and to suffer, soon quitted the place. In the midst of this practical, busy life, the Gospel was lifted up as the source of knowledge and strength, as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The lever of ambition was not rejected, nor was the sting of fear. Rewards were assigned to good deeds and punishment was applied to the disobedient or neglectful. Bodily punishment, however, was strictly prohibited except in one case,—when a boy should carry his impudence to such an excess as to place himself face to face opposite the Brother and to defy him, saying, "You dare not beat me, Mr. Georgi has forbidden you." Of course nothing but a box on the ear could be in its place here. Ambition and fear, however, were only made use of as a leading, under God's blessing, to a better stimulus, to the only true principle, the love of Christ.

It is obvious that a great deal of the success of this scheme of education depended upon the fitness and ability of the Brothers and Sisters. As to the former, Mr. Georgi met with great difficulty in finding the proper persons. One great disadvantage was connected with that situation; it held out no prospect for the future; it never would lead to any settled position in society. To remove this obstacle Mr. Georgi started a normal school, or seminary, for training schoolmasters. He succeeded

in obtaining the sanction of the Government, by which this seminary was acknowledged as a legal institution in the State for educating National school teachers. A fair opportunity was now opened up to the Brothers of making their way towards settling in society. Having served the Establishment for three years, and after a successful examination, a Brother is entitled to enter the seminary and to obtain free board, clothing, and instruction, till he passes his examination as a National school teacher. This measure perfectly answered its purpose. Plenty of Christian young men henceforth applied for situations as Brothers. They have a salary of £4, 10s. During the three years of their service they obtain preparatory instruction four hours a day, while the boys are at school. The seminary, which is capable of lodging thirty-five to forty pupils, is always full. Young men, who are not Brothers, are also admitted, room permitting, but at an annual payment of £7, 10s. Thus while the Establishment is helped out of a difficulty the State is at the same time greatly profited. The support and instruction of thirty young school teachers at a Royal seminary cost the Prussian Government £1350. Here they cost nothing. During the six years since the acknowledgment of the seminary by Royal sanction in 1856, this Institution has provided the Prussian people with about 150 well-instructed schoolmasters, and saved the Government an outlay of nearly £6800. It is also obvious that the young men trained at this seminary have considerable advantages over those trained at the Royal seminaries. With a thoroughly scientific knowledge of the theory of school teaching they combine a practical experience of training and dealing with children, such as can only be

obtained during three years' service at a populous asylum like Düsselthal.* Besides, to impart to these young men a clear understanding of the importance, the object, the dangers, the privileges, and the duties connected with the calling of a schoolmaster, Mr. Georgi held every month a general meeting with them and with their teachers, at which all the chief topics relating to this branch of science were freely discussed. An institution provided with such powers, and conducted in such a spirit, cannot but yield gratifying results.

Recognising the importance of keeping up an inspection of the pupils after they have been apprenticed, and finding it difficult to get correct information from the clergymen, he appointed an able and trustworthy man as an itinerant agent (*Diaspora-Pfleger*), who has no other business but to travel through the country all the year round with the special object of visiting the apprentices, of ascertaining their condition at their respective situations, and of searching out such tradesmasters as enjoy a good reputation in the places of their residence. This measure had the desired effect. A direct and uninterrupted correspondence is thus being kept up between the Director and his pupils abroad.

With grateful feelings Prussia may point to Count von der Recke, who founded Düsselthal as a monument of the power of the Gospel; but with no less grateful feelings both Prussia and the Count may stand by the grave of Mr. Georgi in the churchyard of the Establishment, and bless the memory of that man, who, with a love which did not refuse to sacrifice itself for its object, saved that monument from ruin and made it a permanent blessing as well as an ornament to the whole kingdom.

PASTOR BRÄM'S SOCIETY FOR INDIGENT CHILDREN AT NEUKIRCHEN.

I

How Pastor Bräm prepared the Foundation of his Society

MOST people think they are doing their Christian duty pretty fairly if they subscribe a few shillings a year to one or two charitable institutions. An increase of the number of Establishments in one and the same country or district is thus avoided as much as possible. One would rather enlarge the existing Establishments. But the larger the Establishment the worse it works. An Establishment which contains from fifty to seventy children—and this surely is only a small one—however well managed, cannot but be a little unnatural in many respects. Nature seldom puts more than twelve children together in one house. These are quite enough for a man and his wife to control, if due attention be given to the formation of the various characters, and the development of the various talents. The training of a band of children beyond that number cannot help assuming the character of wholesale education. The larger the num-

ber the greater the resemblance of the Establishment to a barrack. It becomes a *dépôt* of ready-made young citizens, got up for social life at a fixed price, and within a fixed period of time. No wonder that they often turn out unfit for real practice and uncured of inveterate defects. If any one was a *connoisseur* and advocate of Establishments for poor children it was Father Zeller, of Beuggen, whose whole life might be called one continuous prayer both to God and men, for the redemption of the lost children of his people, through the medium of Schools and Asylums. Yet, notwithstanding, he besought his friends and fellow-countrymen not to rely upon those institutions, but to render the salvation of the children a concern of the Christian *family*. He even exulted at the idea of seeing the Establishment superseded by the charitable hospitality of Christian families. At every Annual Meeting of the Beuggen Establishment one could hear him bestow all his eloquence upon his pet theme: "The Christian family-parlour is the best reformatory."

Among the friends who some forty years ago regularly used to attend those interesting annual meetings at Beuggen there was a young man upon whose heart that theme never failed to make a deep impression. His name was Andreas Bräm. He was by birth related to the humble but respectable class of mechanics. His father was a calico-printer at Basle, and in his own person combined both master and servant. Little Andreas would stand behind the chase, brushing the colours for the printing-forms. "So I know the workman's life very well," he wrote at a later period. "I know its joys and sufferings, its privileges and dangers.

I remember what the workman feels, and what he could be, if he got all he wants. I believe I have consequently a *right* to think and to speak of the condition of the work-people, and to desire that the case of a class from which so many a neglected child comes should be taken to heart." But there were a great many capacities lurking in little Andreas besides that of brushing colours.

His mother, during nineteen years, had been a servant in the family of the highly distinguished Basle merchant, Mr. Thurneyssen-Frei. She was the favourite of the family; and when little Andreas was born (1797) Mrs. Thurneyssen stood as godmother over the child at its baptism. He, too, became a pet of the family; and the children of Mr. Thurneyssen, the Thurneyssen-Burckhardts, continued to bestow upon the son the love which their parents had bestowed upon the mother. It must have been a noble, and, in many respects, highly-blessed family; and if longevity may be taken as a sign of Heaven's special favour, that family must have shared that favour in an uncommon measure; for it was Mr. Thurneyssen-Burckhardt's great-great-grandmother who once said to her daughter: "Tell your daughter that her daughter's children are weeping."

Through the kind munificence of this family young Andreas was enabled to attend the best schools of town. He fixed his choice upon the study of theology, and attended college at Basle, during which period he supported himself by giving private lessons. His liberal protectors then enabled him to attend the university of Tübingen for one year and a half. "Those good,

noble people," Mr. Bräm writes, in a private letter, "now have, all of them, departed to their heavenly home; but I am still standing in the most amicable and grateful relation to their children and children's children. I think that the object of such a faithful care and love has a *right* to love and to care for others, and to do them good; and since I have no means of my own, I think I must try to honour the memory of my benefactors, by imitating their example in such a way as is put in my power."

Up to this time the young student had treated religious matters more as objects of philosophical contemplation than as things of the heart. A happy change took place in his inner life, just when he was about to proceed to the Tubingen University in 1819. "I then learned to see," Mr. Bram writes, "that the Word of God is really the fountain of our true religious knowledge, and *the* lamp for our feet, and that I ought to derive my notions from *that* source, and to rectify them according to that rule."

At Tubingen Mr. Bram was introduced into a circle of friends whom it will be sufficient only to name to show the spiritual atmosphere in which the future friend and protector of the neglected and abandoned was to breathe. There were the two Burckhardts, Passavant, Barth, afterwards known as the great friend of missions; Albert Knapp, afterwards the greatest religious poet of Germany of his age; F. Krummacher, afterwards pastor at Duisburg; F. Ball, afterwards *Consistorial-rath* at Coblentz; L. Muller, afterwards minister at Bremen; Perthes, the great publisher, the grandchild of Claudius; and many others, who at later periods shone as stars, of greater or

lesser brilliancy, in the sky of science, literature, and religious life. It was nothing strange that a talented young man, whose mind was formed in the company of such men, should desire to know something more of the world than the beautiful but limited scenery his native country had enabled him to see. The Swiss, like the Germans, having reached the age of maturity, are often visited by a strong inclination to travel into foreign countries; and it is often observed that the more mountainous the land from which they come the more they crave to go to the "boundless plain." Mr. Bräm, after having accomplished his studies at the University, gladly accepted a call as private tutor with a distinguished noble family at Crefeld, one of the most thriving and populous towns in the flattest portion of Rhenish Prussia. Here he made the acquaintance, and gained the most cordial friendship, of the Mennonite pastor, Isaac Molenaar, a man who combined an uncommonly fine taste for science, literature, and art, with an extraordinary amiability of character. So much was this the case that people of all classes in society, learned and unlearned, princes as well as humble workmen, craved his company; and many an English traveller in those days on his tour to the Rhine and the Alps would gladly take a roundabout way by Crefeld, to enjoy the luxury of spending an evening in that interesting man's presence. "Of incalculable blessing," Mr. Bräm writes, "was to me my intercourse with that richly accomplished man, who with so much clearness could speak about all matters concerning the inner and outer life. His image, that of cordial sympathising love, which, going out of itself (*aus sich*

herausgehend), approached its young friend with stirring, reviving, and countenancing power, will always continue to stand before my imagination, and to say to me, 'Go, and do the same to others.'"

After having spent three years in the province of Rhenish Prussia, Mr. Bräm was called to his native town, to be a teacher at the "higher daughters' school" of that place. It was his friend, Mr. Thurneyssen, who contrived to find out that situation for him, and thus to get him in his own neighbourhood again. This occurred in 1824; and the next year Mr. Bräm passed his examination as a candidate for the holy ministry. Here he married a daughter of the Rev. Mr. Rappard, pastor of Neukirchen, near Crefeld, whose acquaintance he had made during his residence in the latter town. She is still his happy partner in life, and his faithful companion in the important work of charity which Providence has led him to start. The eight years which he lived at Basle as a teacher of its first girls' school were a time of preparation for that work. For several years he gave lessons at the Basle Mission-house; and many an evening he spent with Dr. Barth and other friends in discussing the wants of the Mission, and the best means to meet them. When, in 1830, the Basle "Society of the Friends of Israel" was founded, Mr. Bräm was one of its first and most active members; and in this capacity he was enabled to cast deep glances into the condition of the poor, and the causes of pauperism and destitution. Meanwhile a Missionary-station was founded at St. Louis, two miles from Basle, in the neighbouring Alsatia, on behalf of the scattered Protestants of that district. As the place was

vacant, Mr. Bräm devoted his Sundays to preaching to them, and visiting the families and the sick ones. Nor did he limit himself to the oral proclamation of the truth of the Scriptures. To encourage the reading and facilitate the understanding of that holy Book, he published, in 1834, a popular *Description of the Holy Land*, with a School-map of Palestine, of which, as early as 1838, a second edition appeared. And who among the Christian scholars of those days did not hail that excellent production of his pen, which came out in 1835, entitled, *Glances into the History of the World?* In latter days he wrote a popular *History of the Travelling of Israel from Goshen to Mount Sinai*, and a little jewel of a book, called *The Kingdom of God in the Old Testament*. As to the last-mentioned publication, it is indeed a pity that it is so little known. I seldom fell in with a little book which I should be so eager to see in the hands of young people who want a guide to the clear understanding of the connexion between the two dispensations.

It was about the year 1835 that Mr. Bram's father-in-law, the old pastor Rappard, at Neukirchen, required an assistant in his infirmities. Mr. Bram was called to be his co-pastor, and after the old man's demise, which soon ensued, he became his successor. This was the beginning of a new era for that district. All the people soon knew and loved their "dear Father Bräm," who came to the place to put in action, for the good of the miserable, many useful powers which slumbered in the hearts of the Christians. The application of the doctrines of Christianity to practical life had been too much lost sight of in the district. The idea of turning the family-parlour into

an asylum for poor children was a subject so entirely opposed to the common strain of thought, that Pastor Bräm, whose head and heart were full of it, was like one crying in the wilderness. He felt he must try to accustom the minds of the people to it by means of small doses. He started a periodical called "The Bee," in which the matter was discussed. There he showed that it is the duty of every Christian house, more or less, to be a Mission House. "The Bee," during a period of ten years, fluttered over the flowers of Rhenish Prussia, gathering honey for the poor little ones. Its efforts were not in vain. It showed that there was a surprising amount of sweet Christian charity in a district which many thought to contain little beyond the acidity of Calvinistic dogmatism.

Now, the boarding out of poor children was not a new thing, but it had unfortunately got into disrepute. It was the old wretched means often resorted to by local authorities and Poor-Boards to get rid of orphans and foundlings. No wonder, then, that Pastor Bräm met with many prejudices in his attempt to make the matter popular. To remove these prejudices, he travelled through the country. He visited the leading men, and delivered public lectures on the subject. Those lectures, some of which were published, show clear insight into the state of the family-life of the people, and into the best ways of bringing all its ramifications, even the barrenest, under the quickening and fertilising dew of Christian instruction and training. As to the most common objection, viz., "that no such families could be found as Pastor Bräm dreamt off," he thought the

best way of refuting it was to prove the actual existence of such families. He knew a good Christian family in his own congregation, which had declared itself willing to try the thing. A child which nobody cared for was just applying for food and shelter. It was given up to that family at a small weekly sum for board, which was partly paid by the community, partly from voluntary gifts. This experiment was crowned with the happiest success; the family and the child both rejoiced at their union. A second experiment was tried with another family, which again turned out to answer the expectation. Soon twenty-five children were boarded with nine families. Pastor Bram now could say, "Here *are* the families." And this certainly was the best answer to the question, whether they could or could not be found.

This work was done in the spring of 1845. Pastor Bräm felt he could not continue in that way without the co-operation of friends. One evening in December of the same year a small company was assembled in his study. It was a cold, frosty night. A sharp cutting breeze whistled through the leafless trees outside; but inside there was the summer of cordial love and friendship. There was Pastor Bram, with his honest Swiss face; and there was his bosom friend, Mr. Haarbeck, the Burgomaster of the place; and there was Mr. Georgi, who afterwards became Inspector of the Düsselthal Establishment; and there was Mr. Paschen, a farmer of the neighbourhood, whose warm-hearted sympathy with the poor children was equal to his skill in matters of husbandry. The urgent need of the children of the lower class was broached as usual; for what else

could be expected at a meeting of friends in Pastor Bräm's study? The friends wanted to know how the pastor was faring with his plan, for which he had written so much, and delivered so many lectures. And the pastor with enthusiasm told them about his experiments, and expressed his firm conviction that his project was not a Utopia, but perfectly feasible, with the help and under the blessing of the Lord. "And the plan should be carried out at once, on the largest possible scale," he said; "for how alarming is the number of fatherless and houseless children! And what is done in Rhineland and Westphalia to meet their wants? It is true Düsselthal, with its 160 children, is not standing alone any longer; other Establishments have sprung up at Elberfeld, Barmen, Duisburg, and near Moers. But it cannot be denied that the cause of the redemption of abandoned and neglected children has not yet met with that general response in these our manufacturing districts which it has met in Wurtemberg and Switzerland, where the number of Establishments is already upwards of forty-four, at which about 2000 children are being trained. What are we to do in this state of things? Are we to wait till as many Establishments are founded, as will be required for the number of unhappy children that wander about our streets and highways in utter neglect and filth? We may wait for years then; and hundreds of those poor little creatures will be lost meanwhile. I have no objection to good Establishments built by men; but let us not overlook the numerous Establishments which God made long since, and which are quite ready to take the wandering children now. I mean the Christian families, which

certainly in much greater number than is generally believed are scattered among the middle and lower classes of this country. I will take you to some which I know; and I am sure you will not desire better Establishments for the children, which you want to pluck from the fire of perdition, and to restore to God and his Church. There they will find fathers and mothers who are prepared to receive them with loving hearts into a family home, the blessings of which they have hitherto never enjoyed. And when we thus bring to light many a hidden family, supplied with various talents and powers useful for the kingdom of Christ, shall we not have reason to praise God that we were enabled to turn them to profit for the good of souls?"

In this way Pastor Bram spoke to his friends. They felt they must no longer allow him to do the work alone. That same evening a society was formed, called "Society for the Education of Poor Abandoned and Neglected Children in Christian Families." Pastor Brám, of course, was its president. It at once commenced its good work by taking charge of the twenty-five children already boarded out. The assistance and blessing of God were secured by ardent prayers. The assistance and co-operation of men were now to be sought for, by all the means which prudence dictated, and conscience approved of.

As early as January, 1846, a prospectus was printed as "a manuscript for friends," in which the plan and aims of the Society were laid down and clearly explained. The members of the Society, whose number amounted to seven, went about amongst their friends to gain sympathy for the work already commenced. Families of the

artisan and peasant class were visited, and a list was made out of such as might come under consideration. Much to the surprise of the friends, many a family was found not only willing, but perfectly fit for the work. When the matter became more generally known, many families also came forward of their own accord, requesting to be favoured with the care of a child. Some of them, of course, appeared to be impelled by mere pecuniary considerations; but these were not many. It was too well known what sort of families were desired by such men as Pastor Bram and his friends. Besides, the salary was purposely fixed very low, lest desire of profit should influence the applicants. Of course, it was not the intention of the Society to "muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." It was agreed upon that such families as proved worth their noble task should be encouraged by tokens of grateful satisfaction on the part of the Society.

II.

The Principles and Spirit of the Society.

THE basis upon which the Society was founded was expressed in its statutes, which at the close of 1846 were sanctioned by the authority of the Royal Government at Düsseldorf. According to the 2d Article, "it is the special object of the Society to see the children which are intrusted to its care trained in Christian families." A double purpose is hereby aimed at. First, the chil-

dren thus enjoy the blessing of the orderly family-life. Secondly, by transferring the education of the poor to the bosom of the families, the slumbering talents of the Church for this important work are roused and furthered.

This twofold tendency of the work of the Society was constantly kept in view. Not the children *only*, but *also* the families, should earn the blessings of this labour of Christian love. "It is not merely our intention," Pastor Bräm says, "to see the children provided with bread and shelter, and to see them instructed for some useful trade, but we desire that they should obtain a *Christian* education in the bosom of *believing* and *fit* families; that they should be led to the Lord, their only Saviour. We therefore look out carefully for the proper families. Consequently, *seeking* for these constitutes an important part of the work of the Society."

Pastor Bräm tries, by every means possible, to inform the people about all that is required for and connected with poor education. He writes tracts, he travels about preaching on Sunday, he visits the families of his church with the express design to have a conversation with them about this matter; and so do his fellow-labourers in this good work. They never try to persuade families, even though they should deem them most fit for the purpose. They only tell them what the Society is doing, and then leave them to their own considerations.

Thus the Society labours in a spirit of tender discretion. The families which address themselves to the anything-but-easy task of training poor neglected children must be able to do their work with joy, and not with grief. Even the fittest family might be made unfit by an

injudicious treatment,—by giving it a child at a wrong moment, or by giving it one child after another in too rapid succession. Nor is every child suitable for every family. Much wisdom is required, and a certain knowledge of the characters both of the families and of the children, to prevent the union of heterogeneous elements, which would never lead to peace, but always to conflict. Again, some families, orderly, decent, and religiously-minded as they are, appear less fit for the object of the Society, because the spirit of their domestic conversation has a tendency towards a higher tone and style of life than is compatible with the destiny of the children. The Society wants exclusively such families as will, by their own example, prompt the children to *labour* in the sweat of their brow, and accustom them to an humble station in society, where happiness is to be obtained all the easier, because the wants are fewer. And we are really struck with admiration when we observe the earnestness and conscientious accuracy which Pastor Bräm and his friends bestow upon this branch of their operations. But not less must we admire the faithful care and persevering zeal with which they *visit* the families they have intrusted with the children of the Society. Indeed, this *visiting* labour forms the paramount portion of the noble task to which they have addressed themselves. And such visits certainly meet with the approval of the friends of orderly control and administration. Still they would be undervalued if only considered as a measure of mere administrative skill. They are really friendly *visits*, not *visitations*. "We do not go to the families as overseers," Pastor Bräm said to me. "Families which would need

our control could not be used at all. We could not, from conscience, intrust a child to a man or woman who, but for our supervision, would neglect it or train it badly. As far as it is in our power we secure to our children such families as are sure to treat them as costly pearls. But surely, if anything could tend towards impairing and quenching that love, it would be a manifestation of indifference on our part. We should be very unjust towards those families if we left them alone with their work. We should behave very unkindly towards them. Indeed, we find that our visits are a real pleasure to them. They see that we have a heart for them, and for the children. At the same time, their hearts are opened to receive the observations, exhortations, warnings, and even rebukes, which we should find necessary to impart. We thus find an opportunity of teaching and improving the families; of leading them farther on in the way of orderly Christian life and family training."

It is evident that the regular visiting of those families which are scattered about over an area of several hundreds of square miles requires an agent, especially appointed for the purpose. The first year or two Pastor Bräm took upon himself the work of a travelling agent; but when the number of the families and the distances increased he gave it up to his assistant-preacher, a young candidate who lived at his house. Since then, in case of a vacancy, the greatest care has been taken in calling a candidate for Pastor Bräm's assistance, as this man has to occupy the important place of a travelling or visiting agent of the Society.

Now, taking all this into account, and learning that, in

1860, for instance, each of the sixty-five families, which then were connected with the Society, was visited four times from January to December by the agent of the Society, for which he made thirty-four journeys large and small, occupying 134 days, we declare that we do not know which to admire most, the system of poor education as planned by the Society, or the way in which it is carried out. This is not a training machine put in motion like a steam-engine, kept moving by the *vis inertiæ* of annual subscriptions, and working its way with the iron regularity of a cold administration.

It is obvious that this system of poor training presents advantages which are sought for in vain at the Establishments, however well conducted the latter may be. The farther the education of reasonable human beings is kept from artificiality, and the nearer it approaches nature, the more it will reach its object and benefit society. Society is an aggregate of families, not of barrack-like establishments; and children trained at the latter, when returned to society, will always more or less experience the effect of having been isolated from the commonwealth of which they are members.

The unfavourable result of this comparison for the Establishments was much felt by their friends, and it was with some feeling of disapproval that they heard of Pastor Bräm's plan. It was feared that he would set up an opposition society against the Establishment system, and thus considerably injure those institutions which are dependent upon the good-will and voluntary contributions of the public. But this fear was soon abandoned when the kind-hearted parson, than whom nobody could be

more averse to breaking down anything good and useful, fully explained himself upon the matter.

Pastor Bräm does not wish to limit this noble and important work to Establishment-committees and philanthropic societies only. He wants the churches, and especially the Presbyteries, to take up the matter. The system of Christian family training should supersede the old hackneyed Boarding system. Each church should try to establish a local society in its own bosom, for seeking and visiting fit Christian families within the pale of its own parish. The establishing of such local societies need not supersede the work of a general society, such as Bräm's. The General Society would, on the contrary, assist the churches in case there were no sufficient number of fit families in a certain parish. In every one of his Reports, Bräm urges this topic. Continually these sentences occur! "The fundamental principles of our Society must penetrate the life of the *Church*. The training of the poor neglected children in families should be a *church*-concern." Bräm expresses his aversion to the removal of the children out of their birthplace, if it can be helped. They should, as much as possible, be kept in the presence of the relations and neighbours among whom Providence has placed them. They are more likely to find loving hearts and a charitable home among them than in a strange district. But this principle can only be acted upon if every Church, or at least every Presbytery adopts the system of family-training. Still the removal of a child may sometimes be found necessary in order to carry it away from bad influences. Therefore a General or Central Society will always be

required to assist the Churches in these and similar cases. These are the principles, and this is the spirit which animates the Neukirchen Society.

III.

The further History and Progress of the Society—Pastor Bräm's "Correspondenzblatt"

WHEN Pastor Bräm and his friends started their Society at the close of 1845, they were prepared to meet the obstacles which ignorance and prejudice would put in their way. The matter being quite new, and seeming to threaten the Poor Establishments and Orphan-houses with injury, it was expected that some time would be required to reconcile the good people with the untried stranger, and to convince them that he was not so bad as reported. This expectation was confirmed to a certain extent, as it took some time and trouble to obtain a satisfactory number of contributors. The annual amount for which the Society took a child to its charge was fixed at 36 thalers (£5, 8s.), including board, lodging, clothing, school expense, and everything besides. The whole of this sum, and in many cases considerably more, went to the family; and as the expense for clothing, schooling, and medical treatment, came to the charge of the Society, which, besides, had to pay its expenses for administration, etc., it was obvious that, but for voluntary contributions

pouring in, the enterprise must turn out a failure. But even that small amount of £5, 8s. was but seldom paid. Only a few individuals were found who were willing or able to take a child to their account at the full sum. Some offered £4, 10s., some £3, and for a considerable number of children no patrons could be found at all. This state of things kept the Society lingering during the first two years of its existence. Its funds were to be supplied from collections among friends which often dripped in by farthings and pence. This accounts for the number of children not having increased during that period. Then the year 1847 came on, with its unsuccessful harvest and dearth, and the year 1848 with its revolutionary movements. It was almost a miracle that the Society kept alive, and we may wonder that, in spite of all these disastrous circumstances, it closed the year 1848 with twenty-nine children in its book, viz., twenty boys and nine girls, who were boarded with sixteen families. Out of these families nine resided at Neukirchen and the rest at places ten and fifteen miles distant. Among the heads were two schoolmasters, one merchant, six farmers, three weavers, and four mechanics. The expenditure during 1848 was £266, 2s., 5d., which was covered by the income with a surplus of £3, 3s.

This really was a gratifying result so far as regarded the question of pounds shillings and pence. As to the condition of the children, the result was not less satisfactory. The poor creatures had quite revived under the faithful and judicious care of their new parents, and had no other feeling but that they were natural members of the family with which they were living. Nor were the

families less content. Some masters of families would, with tears in their eyes, thank Pastor Bräm for the great blessing he had brought into their house, by enabling them to take a "little one" in the name of Christ under their family roof.

This greatly encouraged the good minister. Throwing heart and soul into the work, he walked through the country in all directions, as an apostle of a good cause for which he tried to gain everybody's heart. Sympathy began to manifest itself at various quarters; and before the year 1848 drew to its close Pastor Bräm had the pleasure of seeing two branch societies started at two different places in the country, each of which was presided over by the clergyman of the place.

The Society now got into smooth waters. The next year other three branch societies were established. They soon proved of great value to the chief society. Through their knowledge of the local circumstances of the places where they resided, they were able to furnish the central committee with information about fit families and good tradesmasters, with whom the children could be apprenticed. Statutes were drawn up to regulate the relation between the Branch and the Mother Society. The Branch Society has its own board of administration, and acts quite independently of the central committee: only in case it should require a grant from the Mother Society for the boarding of a child it is bound to ask the permission of the central committee. The Branch Society conducts its financial administration independently of the central committee; but if there should be a favourable balance at the close of the year, the

surplus must be poured into the box of the Mother Society. The central committee does nothing in the district of the Branch Society, save with its approval and through its mediation. The Branch Society also may salary its own agents; but the choice of those individuals must be submitted to the approval of the Mother Society.

The usefulness of these Branch Societies, which, by their connexion with the Mother Society, obtained a standing in the opinion of the public, was even acknowledged by the Government. The Branch Society of St. Goar, on the Rhine, for instance, was requested to take the control of the poor children which were boarded out to the account of the public funds. It must be mentioned that the way in which this boarding had been carried on was connected with so many abuses that the Branch Society felt called upon to memorialise the Government upon the subject, and to offer its services. The Government not only thankfully accepted this offer, but also requested the Branch Society to extend its control over the adjacent districts of Kreuznach, Simmern, and Coblentz, and allowed a grant of 30 thalers (£4, 10s.) for covering expenses. It cannot, therefore, surprise us to find that the Government allowed free postage to the Mother Society, and acknowledged it as a moral body in the State.

Besides these Branch Societies, independent local Societies were established after the pattern of the Neukirchen one. Elberfeld took the start in 1849; then followed Barmen, Ronsdorf, Solingen, and other places in the neighbourhood. These Societies had redeemed

about 300 children as early as the year 1854. That number has certainly more than doubled during the ten years which have since elapsed. Gradually, presbyteries also, on noticing the blessings that flowed from the family-training system, adopted and introduced it into the churches. Thus Bräm's heart's desire, so often pooh-poohed as a Utopian dream, was realised even by those who had disputed its practicableness. Nothing is more irresistible than the logic of facts.

The Society had not long begun its operations when the urgent need of a house was felt, into which children could be taken till suitable families were found for them. Experience had taught Pastor Bräm and his friends that it was necessary to examine the character, temper, and talents of a child during a few months, before it could be known which kind of family would suit it best. In 1849, the members resolved to hire a house at Neukirchen, and to call a Christian man as house-father. The excellent deacon-establishment of Duisburg provided the Society with the desired person, while a good woman was engaged as housekeeper. The house was opened with five children. Their number since often increased to twenty. Many difficulties, however, were experienced, owing to the house not being the property of the Society. It could be bought for 1400 thalers (£210). Pastor Bräm travelled to Elberfeld to try and obtain a loan to that amount; and he returned with more than was required to buy the house. Its rear, however, wanted considerable alterations, so that the surplus and the additional gifts of some friends were absorbed for its completion. It was opened in 1855. It is a simple, strongly-built, two-

storied house. The dining, working, and school rooms are on the ground floor; the two dormitories for both sexes occupy the first floor. All the apartments are what they should be, simple, wholesome abodes for poor children. A garden and about seven acres of arable land are connected with the property The children here have an opportunity of practising bodily exercise through agricultural labour.

To give an idea of the tone and style in which "Father Bräm" used to speak and write, I shall copy a few little scraps from his "Correspondenzblatt:"—

"*From the Operative Life.*—You have commenced, dear Madam and friend, to visit the families of our manufacturing workpeople, and I wish you God's speed in it. Much good may come out of it if carried on in the right way, without expecting too speedy results; in the spirit of patience, with calm, prudent love, with steadiness and meekness. You will meet with all sorts of things, with much misery, and neglect, and distressing facts, but also with much that will please and encourage you. You will find how necessary it is to know this peculiar world, this artisan world well, with its wants and experiences, its sufferings and joys, in order to be able to understand it, to judge it justly, and to be truly useful to it. I will gather all I can find about this subject, and communicate it to you. May it be of some service to you. You will find much in it which is not *exclusively* applicable to the operative world. For instance this: Once upon a time there lived an old gentleman in a large house. He had servants, and everything he wanted, yet he was not happy, and, when things did not go as he wished, he was cross. At

last his servants left him. Quite out of temper he went to a neighbour to take counsel what to do.

"'It appears to me,' the neighbour said, 'that it would be as well for you to oil yourself a little.'

"'To oil myself?'

"'Yes. But I will explain myself. Some time ago one of the doors in my house creaked. Nobody, therefore, liked to go in or out by it. I then oiled its hinges one day, and it has been constantly used by everybody since.'

"'Then do you think I am like your creaking door?' the old gentleman replied. 'How, then, do you want me to oil myself.'

"'Why, that's an easy matter to tell you. Go home, and engage a servant, and, when he does something right, praise him. If, on the contrary, he does something wrong, be not cross. Oil your voice and words with the oil of love.'

"The old gentleman repaired home. The last I heard of him was, that he used so much oil that no harsh sound was heard in his house any more.

"Each family should be possessed of a bottle of that oil, and apply a few drops wherever there should turn up a creaking hinge.

"If you want to visit the families of the mill-workers, I kindly beg you not to forget to take that bottle with you." ("Correspondenzblatt," No. 12.)

"*For Owners of Mills.*—The manufacturing industry easily begets hatred against the rich. People see those big premises, and think how hundreds and thousands of hands all serve to profit one man. This does not come to light so conspicuously with the capitalist. He has in-

vested his money here and there with a few interest-paying people, who use his money, and yet do not labour for *him*, though they must give him a portion of their wages. The merchant likewise has comparatively but few *employés*, who mostly are paid well. But it is the manufacturer upon whom the eyes of the working people are fixed. 'He is rich and a gentleman through our labour,' they think, and they compare their own lot with his.

"Envy is a hateful and dangerous thing. Manufacturers, take care that it do not spring up! Put the working man in such a position that there be no inducement for him to envy you; deal nobly with him; respect in him the man and the Christian; give him his honest wages. If people have work and deserts, and a protection against sickness and old age; and if, with the bread they eat, a sunbeam shines into their face, they cannot consider themselves as paupers, though they are not rich. They belong to a humble class, but, if treated well, they are not at all people who look out for any revolution that may turn up."

In this way Pastor Bräm speaks to the people in his 'Correspondenzblatt.' He has published several tracts and pamphlets besides, all pointing to the high calling of the Christian family in rescuing the lost, and at the incalculable blessing that must proceed from a household which tries to make others partakers of the privileges with which Christ has enriched it. Among these pamphlets, one entitled "Features of Abraham's Domestic Life," is really a gem of a little book.

IV.

Statutes, etc.

In 1863 the total number of children which the Society had provided for during the eighteen years of its existence, amounted to 296, of which 113 were still under its care.

It is the desire of the Society to restore as much as possible the relationship between the children and their natural supporters and trainers. It was often found that parents misused the Society by pretending to be poorer than they really were. Their children were immediately returned when their true position was brought to light.

The Statutes of the Society are very simple. Anything like cumbrous mechanism is avoided. Pastor Bräm, the President, assisted by his friend the Burgomaster Haarbeck, who is the Treasurer, conducts the administration of the finances, which run over an annual income of about 5700 thalers (£850). The master of a family receives for the boarding and lodging of a child a remuneration varying according to his wants and circumstances. Those who commit a child to the Society for education must abstain from any effort whatever to interfere with the training of the child, else they must repay to the Society all its expenses. The members of the Society perform their services gratuitously. Their number may not be under seven, and not above fifteen. They hold a meeting at Neukirchen every month.

THE ORPHAN-HOUSE AT LAHR DINGLINGEN

(IN THE GRAND DUCHY OF BADEN).

I

Ferdinand Fingado, the Lahr Haberdasher

THE multitude of English tourists, who, after having enjoyed the hills of the Rhine and the Molkenkuhr of Heidelberg, rejoice at finding that in one day they may fly through the distance that separates this town from Baden-Baden or from Basle, will know that on the great railway of Baden there is a little station called Dinglingen, which you arrive at immediately after having past Kehl, from where another railway branches off to Strasburg. Neither the station nor its scenery round about presents anything to attract attention. With the exception of a range of dark-coloured hills that line the eastern horizon at a far distance, you observe nothing but a flat country, whose golden cornfields, verdant pastures, and charming little groves, tell their own story about the fertility of the soil, the industry of man, and the blessings of Heaven; and if the only thing you are wanting at present is to reach Switzerland as soon as you can, you

hail the sound of the whistle which bids the train quit this spot at once

Still you might spend a happy day here, if it was your pleasure to make the acquaintance of good people and to witness a work of Christian love When you look out of the window of your carriage towards the station, you notice, at a mile's distance, a pretty village, from which the station takes its name One white plastered



The Orphan House, as seen from the Railway Station

two-storied building, which lifts its elegant frame above all the neighbouring houses, attracts your attention. It stands at a small distance from the village in a spacious garden, which borders upon an extensive field. It shades a few smaller premises with which at its rear it is connected A broad macadamised road, which evidently is the turnpike-road to a neighbouring place, passes by its front door; and save for the absence of a high chimney,

or of a mill-pond, you would suppose it to be some manufactory. Nor would your supposition be so very absurd, for this is a manufacturing district. The pretty town of Lahr, at two miles distance from Dinglingen, teems with manufactures, which enable its ten thousand inhabitants to carry on a large trade in woollen, cotton, and flax goods, in sackcloth and morocco leather, in cutlery, playing-cards, and tobacco-boxes.

But the building of which I am now speaking is not a mill; it is an orphanage and asylum for poor neglected children, entirely supported by voluntary contributions. Nor is such an institution superfluous in a manufacturing district like this. It must be borne in mind, too, that out of the one million and a half of inhabitants of the Duchy, two-thirds are Roman Catholics, while the Protestants at many places are given up to a spirit of religious indifference, which cares little for the salvation of the lost and the neglected.

That same spirit characterised some thirty years ago an inhabitant of Lahr of the name of Ferdinand Fingado. He kept a considerable millinery and haberdashery shop, which enabled him to support himself, his wife, and one or two children in comfortable circumstances. He was counted among the most respectable inhabitants of the town. With the burgomaster, the clergyman, and the judge, he was on the best terms. To assist them in anything conducive towards the social and material well-being of the community was at once his pleasure and pride. As he was an active man and gifted with a considerable amount of practical knowledge and administrative talent, he used to be consulted on many questions of social

interest, and to be intrusted with the care of many a scheme on behalf of the poor. So he was secretary to the Society of Ladies for boarding out poor neglected children with families. And doubtless, as to his administration of this work, he was a pattern of zeal, ability, and financial skill. He could with great adroitness assist at the public auctions, at which, according to the old custom, the foundlings and abandoned children were boarded out with the lowest bidders. It is true that it was generally known most of those poor creatures were treated like slaves by their foster parents; but it was, on the other hand, deemed a gratifying fact that they were got rid of at an amazingly cheap rate.

But a soft whisper would now and then rise in Mr. Fingado's heart which made him uneasy. It told him that there was something wrong about his life, however enviable he might be in the sight of men. He could not make out what it was, but he felt that he lacked something of great importance. His good wife shared this sentiment. Indeed, she had felt it long before, but what was needed was not quite clear to her either. In addition to this, a series of disasters, heavy losses in trade, and domestic calamities, commenced to depress their spirits. They experienced the vanity of all pleasant things here below, and began to look out for some better foundation to rest their hopes upon.

Souls which are in such a condition are prepared for the consolation of the Gospel. Nor did it stay away. As early as the year 1844 a friend, who knew the true fountain of peace, paid them a visit. He entered their house with the love of an all-sufficient living Saviour in his heart.

Their eyes were opened to discover the precious pearl of salvation through grace; and their hearts to receive the Saviour as their Lord and their God. The Rev. Mr. Rein, a clergyman of the neighbouring village of Nonnenweier, confirmed the good work that was going on in their souls by his pastoral visits and addresses. Even the servants were quickened by the power of the living word, and before the year drew to its close Mr. Fingado could joyfully exclaim, *As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.* The change which had taken place in Mr. Fingado's heart and house was soon reported throughout the whole place and its neighbourhood. And no wonder: he did not put his candle under a bushel.

How Mr Fingado was led to the resolution of becoming a Father to the Fatherless, and what struggles this resolution caused him.

MEANWHILE trade became very bad. The lower and middle classes were in distress. A feeling of discontent prevailed throughout all classes of Society. That storm of revolution was preparing which was to break out in 1848. The United States of North America held out plausible prospects to many a struggling tradesman and farmer. Mr. Fingado, too, turned his eyes in that direction. Surrounded by an opposing population, he was pleased with the idea of founding a Christian colony of German farmers at some remote, quiet spot of the New

World. There were many individuals in the neighbouring districts who sympathised with him as to his religious opinions. They honoured him with their confidence, and forty families requested him to be their guide and leader to the new country. He did not know which to choose—to stay or to go. His wife shed tears whenever the matter was broached. She *could* not believe that God had nothing for them to do in their own country. At length he resolved to go, but she prayed that God might prevent it. And this prayer was heard. Mr. Fingado put his house and grounds to public sale; but about the same time the Revolution of 1848 broke out. Nobody wanted to buy the property. The emigration-plan collapsed, and Mr. Fingado was compelled to stay.

He was sorry for it. He had already established an imaginary paradise in America, and now he found himself in the wilderness of European confusion again. Still he submitted to the powerful hand of God; and one morning, entering his breakfast-room with a cheerful countenance, he said to his wife: "It is all right now; the Lord has taken everything from me; we will stay and do His work in this country."

He again took to his business, which though sufficiently improved to support his small family, had lost the full sympathy of his soul. He wanted a sphere of labour in which he might be operating in a more direct way upon the spiritual well-being of his neighbours. In this mood of mind he one day travelled to Beuggen, to attend the annual public meeting of father Zeller's excellent Poor School. Now, every one not wholly unacquainted with the history of German and Swiss Christian

philanthropy knows what father Zeller's annual meetings were. They might be called the nearest approach to the day of Pentecost that the church of the nineteenth century could point to. What friend of Christ and his missions, living at twenty, fifty miles round, could stay at home when father Zeller held his meeting? How many a backslider has been brought back to activity; how many an active Christian has been guided in the right course through that wonderful man's all-inspiring speeches! It is calculated that at least forty of the Swiss and German charitable institutions owe their origin to the all-but-irresistible impulse of his eloquence on these occasions. Mr. Fingado's asylum is one of them. "I cannot possibly describe the impression," Mr. Fingado says, "which I experienced at that meeting. I thought I was transplanted into a new world. I saw father Zeller's Establishment; I saw the numerous band of children assembled under the shadow of his wings, like chickens rescued from the raging storm. I heard him tell us how nothing but the love of Christ had enabled him to begin and to carry on that great work. I heard him entreat us to have mercy upon the poor neglected children of the nation; to feel our heavenly calling as Christians, that of being missionaries ourselves; and to open our houses as asylums for the lost, the neglected, and the abandoned. I felt ashamed of myself when I compared my work with that of this good man. The saying of the Apostle was brought home to my heart: *The kingdom of God is not in word but in power.*

He returned that afternoon to Basle, where he stayed with old Mr. Spittler, the well-known founder of the

Basle Missionary Society. The venerable patriarch got his guest to tell all he could about father Zeller, his work, and his words. They kept talking till one o'clock in the morning. As a son pours out his heart to his father, so Mr. Fingado to his aged host. Mr. Spittler, who was gifted with an extraordinary talent of estimating character, at once discovered that there was an excellent shepherd of little lost sheep hid in that Lahr shopkeeper. He urgently advised him to open his house as a refuge for the abandoned children of that fearfully neglected manufacturing district. Mr. Fingado, however, did not look at matters in the same way. He was not worthy of such a great work. He was quite unfit for it. No, no, such labours ought to be left to men like father Zeller. He was but a poor tradesman, without knowledge, without talent, without power. But Mr. Spittler, with a kind smile, tapped him on his shoulder, and said, "We'll see; we'll see. Moses spoke in the same way. Still he conquered Pharaoh and his hosts."

Mr. Fingado went home. The more he turned the matter over in his mind the more he was confirmed in his opinion that he was not the man for such a work. His wife, on the contrary, thought Mr. Spittler was right; but she did not say much. She prayed all the more in secret.

So, about a fortnight elapsed, when one day they were gladdened by a visit of a Christian friend, a Swiss clergyman. He brought the following letter from Mr. Spittler:—

"The dear Mr. T. will be so kind as to hand the enclosed contribution to our dear brother Fingado as a

mite for his Orphan-house, with my cordial salutation and good wishes. May the Lord give courage and faith to dear Fingado to carry out his plan without fainting. Oh, how much has the Saviour done for us, and how little are we doing for Him! May he graciously hear our groanings. Amen.—In haste, C F. SPITTLER.

"BASLE, *July* 4, 1848"

This letter was accompanied with a *louis d'or* (18s. 4d.). Mr. Fingado looked at the gold coin with perfect amazement. His wife smiled, and so did the Christian friend who had brought this first little stone for the new building. The matter now took quite a new form to Mr. Fingado. It was not the question now, Will you found an orphan-house? but, Dare you send back this offer of love, and *refuse* to begin the work? He took the letter and the gold coin with him into his closet: there the matter was soon settled. Mr. Fingado resolved to take the lost children by the hand, and to become a father to the fatherless.

He was still Secretary to the Ladies' Society. This Society was under a committee of gentlemen, of which Mr. Fingado was a member. He thought the simplest way of carrying out his plan would be to request the committee to transfer the children which were under their supervision to his care. There was a small back-house connected with his dwelling, which he was willing to furnish for the purpose; but no sooner was his plan known than powerful opposition on the part of the municipality, the clergy, and the aristocracy broke out. Not only was his request declined; it was resolved to

turn him out of the committee as quickly as possible, and all possible efforts were made to that end. At the annual meeting of the committee, which happened to come on in a few days, he was even called a *Tartuffe*. Several times he wanted to rise and to speak, but he felt as if paralysed; his nerves were so affected that his tongue swelled in his mouth. He was compelled to hear everything, and to say nothing. The voting went on, and he was turned out with uproarious applause. The committee then passed a resolution to build an orphan-house of their own. Steps were taken at once to collect subscriptions. The leading men of the town favoured the undertaking with their patronage; and on the 22d of August, 1848, the "Lahr Local Paper" contained a leading article upon the subject, adverse to Mr. Fingado.

The language used was very plain; and if any case ever seemed hopeless, it was that of poor Fingado. He called upon the clergyman of the town, and requested him to examine his religious principles. He gave a clear account of his religious opinions, which proved conformable with the creed of the Church. He asked the minister to declare their soundness, and to protect him against the public charge of one-sidedness. The minister shrugged his shoulders and gave no reply.

III.

The little Family The old Postmaster and the new Asylum

THE newspaper article, eloquently written as it was, proved incapable of unlocking the people's purses. Scarcely any contributions came in for the public orphanage. The ladies were compelled to continue going through their usual routine, but henceforth unsupported by a secretary like Mr. Fingado. They soon felt that, with all those demonstrations, they had got the worst of it. Some of them kindly urged him to let bygones be bygones, and to come back again. Matters had now gone too far for that. Mr. Fingado resolved to walk his own way.

There was an auction of children in the spring of 1849. Mr. Fingado took three girls at 9 florins (15s.) each. For this sum he had to feed, to dress, and to train them during twelve months. The back-house was soon fitted up, and a room arranged as a dormitory. There was a festival in Mr. Fingado's house when the poor little things stepped over his threshold. The faces of his wife and servants beamed with joy. They felt this was the first nail driven into the ark of salvation for many lost creatures. No sooner was it known that Mr. Fingado had taken children into his house, than gifts poured in from different quarters, to keep company with Mr. Spittler's *louis d'or*. Still the amount of the contributions proved unequal to the expenditure. Mr. Fingado was often compelled to advance sums from the

till of his own shop, as in 1850 his little establishment already numbered ten girls. Fortunately his business went on tolerably, and thus he could afford to make an advance. But this resource was taken from him, when a long chronic disease befel his good wife, who was the very soul of the concern. Business went back; sales fell off. Then came hard days. It was not congenial to Mr. Fingado's principles to go about collecting. Perhaps had he been a little less scrupulous in this respect, he might have been less troubled in other ways. Mr. Fingado's biography records many proofs of God's love and wonderful wisdom in His dealings with His children.

Hitherto he had taken girls only. His meek, quiet character seemed to shun the difficulties which were naturally connected with the training of boys. One day, however, a lady, a member of the well-bred class, brought a boy for whom she offered to pay 50 florins a year (£4, 3s. 4d.). He declined, as he had no accommodation for boys. Tears came into the eyes of the good lady. She entreated him for the sake of Christ to take the poor fatherless lad. He could not resist the pressure put upon him. A second dormitory must now be provided. Soon other boys followed. In 1852 the number of pupils amounted to between thirty and forty.

Mr. Fingado's back-house became too small for such an increasing population. He thought about breaking up his shop and converting his dwelling-house into an asylum. It was found, however, that this could not be effected without the destruction of much valuable property. He

had better try to buy a building outside the town, and sell or let his own house. Now there was a large building with adjacent garden at Dinglingen, two miles from Lahr, which appeared very fit for Mr. Fingado's purpose. It was the property of an octogenarian, who, from his former occupation, was called "the old postmaster." Though in pretty affluent circumstances, his property exhibited considerable neglect and decay. Nor was his personal aspect more pleasing. He was an unhappy old man, and lived quite alone in his spacious house. His dinner was every day brought to him from a village three miles distant, where lived his nephew who was to inherit all his property. A warm-hearted conversation was as rare a thing to him as a hot meal. When one saw him seated in one of the spacious rooms of his hollow, cavern-like house, he could not help thinking of one buried alive. To offer this man a reasonable price for his house, was to deliver him out of his grave. To present to his imagination the prospect of a hot dinner, was like bringing a dead man to life again.

Mr. Fingado tried the old man, and, much to his joy, found him quite disposed to enter upon an agreement. The price of the house and garden was 10,000 florins (£833); but upon learning that the premises were to be employed as an asylum for poor children, the old postmaster granted the purchase for 7000 (£583). He added one condition, however. He wanted to keep two rooms for himself, in order to obtain his dinner from the family, and attendance from the servants. Thus, as an eye-witness, he wanted to learn what sort of institution Mr. Fingado's Asylum was, and, if it proved a good work,

he declared himself willing to do something more for it.

Mr. Fingado did not hesitate to accept this offer with its condition. He had no money, but he trusted he would get it in time. Nor did his expectation prove too sanguine. When the report spread that the postmaster's large house had been procured, gifts poured in from different quarters. Mr. Fingado was soon enabled to pay 2000 florins (£166); a Christian friend advanced the rest at a moderate interest as a mortgage upon the premises, and thus the alteration and repair of the building could at once be proceeded with. It was no trifle, however, to transform such a neglected dust-hole into a habitable abode for a numerous family. But many friendly hands came to assist; and Mr Fingado himself, at the head of his boys, and supported by his son-in-law, who at the same time was the schoolmaster of the children, waged a successful war with hammer, trowel, crow, and shovel against the decayed walls and rotten floors, and caused a new, strong, and well-organised building to rise as a trophy of his perseverance. As soon as a couple of rooms were fit for habitation, the whole household removed from Lahr to Dinglingen. This happened in February, 1853. As early as the 1st of June the whole building was completed; and on the 1st of July, Mr. Fingado invited all his friends, near and far, to a feastly inauguration of the new Asylum. This invitation was not received with indifference. Mr. Fingado's friends hailed it with great enthusiasm. His enemies could not deny that his work was a good and wonderful one. Many of them, who never could be gained by his words, were now gained by

his deeds, and became his supporters. The clergyman of Lahr, who, five years before, had even hesitated to declare that Mr. Fingado's faith was accordant with sound Christian theology, now came to declare in a public speech that his work was at least the result of sound Christian love.

Mr. Fingado formed a Committee of five Christian friends, of which he himself was a member. The property was put in the name of this Committee, and regulations were drawn up for its further administration. The Asylum was recognised as a moral corporation by the Government, in 1862. The house, with barn, stable, workshop, and garden, occupied an area of about six acres. It is a simple, two-storied building, capable of accommodating from 70 to 80 children. At present (1863) there are 62, 34 being boys and 28 girls. Besides the rooms appointed for the dwelling of Mr. Fingado and his family there are rooms for the schoolmaster, the tailor-master, the gardener, the steward, the shoemaker master, who is a dumb and mute person, and for the servants. The dining and school rooms and the dormitories, which are upstairs, are lofty, well-ventilated apartments, with white-washed walls and wooden floors. The garden behind the house is a well laid-out piece of ground. It was November when I saw it; but it must be a charming spot in summer. It contains a nursery of trees and of fine flowers. It also affords an opportunity for rearing silk-crop, which Mr. Hanck, the teacher, who is son-in-law to Mr. Fingado, seems to have a fancy for. In 1862 he realised £25 by it, which he presented to the Asylum. The stable contains five cows and one horse. These are for the use of those children who are to be trained for farming.

The forty children with which Mr. Fingado entered the new building in 1853, soon increased to about sixty. Meanwhile the old postmaster found himself, as it were, transplanted from a desert into a paradise. The hot dinners cheered his old frame, and the kind affectionate conversation of the family quickened his spirit. He was quite convinced that he had sold his house for a good object, and, having experienced the benefits of Mr. Fingado's care and treatment for some time, he resolved to alter his will, and to bequeath all his property, amounting to between 20,000 and 30,000 florins (£1866 to £2500), to the Establishment. But greatly surprised was the old man when he learned that Mr. Fingado absolutely declined this generous offer, notwithstanding that there was still a debt of 8000 florins (£666) on the premises! It was Mr. Fingado's conviction that the money would be a snare to him and his friends. Hitherto they had been living entirely upon the voluntary gifts of Christian charity. He was sure that the postmaster's legacy would fill their heart and house with dead gods, and turn out the living one. Besides, it was expected that the postmaster's nephew and his two sons would try everything to get the will cancelled. They were famous throughout the neighbourhood for their pertinacious, litigious character. So there was sure to be in store a long and tedious lawsuit, which would disturb their peace, and drag them into endless quarrels. The Committee quite agreed with Mr. Fingado. No sooner was it known that the old man had altered his will in favour of the Establishment, than the Committee, in the presence of three witnesses, urgently and solemnly entreated him to cancel

this alteration, as they decidedly refused to be his heirs. But the octogenarian was quite immovable. He died in January, 1859. Immediately after the opening of the will, the Committee tendered its renunciation of it to the Government. The property then, by decision of the Grand Duke, was disposed of in favour of the poor of Lahr.

IV.

Present State of the Establishment—Statistics, etc.

At the close of July, 1862–63, 150 children had been taken in since the commencement of Mr. Fingado's philanthropic labours. Among these many may be pointed to as giving striking evidences of their sincere love to the Saviour, and of their cordial and grateful remembrance of the good they have derived from the Establishment.

A child is admitted at 40 florins (£3, 6s. 8d.) per annum, but many are allowed at a much lower price, according to circumstances. The money which during the year 1862–63 came in for the boarding of 62 children (34 boys and 28 girls) only amounted to 2764·15 florins (£230), *i.e.*, about £3, 9s. 3d. a head. The rest of the income, to the amount of 4810 florins (£400, 16s. 8d.), was derived from voluntary contributions. This enabled the Committee to close with a balance of 30 florins (£2, 10s.) in hand. But there is still a debt of 8800 florins (£733) pressing upon the premises, which the

Committee, notwithstanding its utmost efforts, had not been able to clear off. This is a burden which costs the Society an annual expenditure of about £32 for interest The value of the property has considerably increased during the last decennium. In 1853 the landed property only comprised six acres; its present area amounts to nearly sixteen acres Twenty four acres are rented Four buildings stand on the Establishment's grounds, viz, 1, the principal dwelling-house, which contains the apartments of Mr Fingado and the girls' house, 2, the boys' house, in which the school and workrooms are, 3, the stable, storehouse, and barn, 4, the carriage house, with which a private dwelling for the farmer is connected

The annual public meeting at the Establishment is a real festival for the religious people of the district As it is always held in June, the proceedings are carried on in the open air, at the spacious farm yard of the Establishment Early in the morning small companies of friends may be seen dotting the various roads that lead to Dinglingen Among them, perhaps, there are some who only come from curiosity, but who return in the evening under serious impressions, because they have witnessed how lost sheep have found a good shepherd Ministers who are famous for their piety and popular eloquence are invited to favour the meeting with their presence. A regular service is held by one of the ministers, which is opened and closed by the hymns and psalms of the children and the friends who have come to witness their happiness Then opportunity is given to the other ministers and friends to say a word to the children and the master of the family.

PASTOR O. G. HELDRING AND HIS ESTABLISHMENTS

(NEAR HEMMEN, IN HOLLAND.

I

Where to find Mr Heldring and his Work

THE British traveller who, on his way to the German Rhine and the Swiss Alps, passes through Holland by the Dutch-Rhenish Railway, will probably bless the steam-engine, which, within a few hours, hurries him through a flat, uninteresting country, where he observes little more than cattle and meadows, windmills and ditches. It is true that, after having passed the gray-headed Episcopal town and University of Utrecht, his eyes on a sudden are agreeably surprised by the sight of charming groves, stately avenues of beeches and oaks, and handsome parks and villas, which proclaim at once the wealth and the good taste of their owners. But this incoyment does not last very long. Soon the rattling was c dashes into a district, which, scantily endowed as it the Cnature, never was privileged with the benefits of (£2, 1ion. Vast plains of dun, swarthy-looking heath florins (themselves to right and left, and would present

an aspect as monotonous as the Desert of Zahara, did not a poor miserable hut, or a little fir-grove, or a small flock of sheep, guided by a "knitting" shepherd, now and then relieve the solitude of the scenery. This is that bare, sterile part of Holland, which, extending to the north as far as the River Yssel, forms the district of the *Vaal-Ouwe* or *Veluwe*, an old Teutonic word, which means *poor country*. No sooner, however, has the traveller reached the station Ede (the last but one before arriving at Arnheim), than his eyes at once discover to the right a smiling landscape, whose prosperous and luxurious aspect announces the approach of fertilising Father Rhine. Here is the entrance to another district of the kingdom, which the ancient inhabitants called *Bat-ouwe* or *Betuwe*, i.e., *better country*. If you have a day or two to spare, it will be worth your while to get out here, and take the coach to Wageningen, a pretty country town three miles from Ede, and to cross the Rhine by the ferry. You really think you enter a paradise. The *Betuwe*, encircled by two noble rivers, the Rhine and the Waal, draws from these fertilising streams all that is required to make a country rich in produce, and accessible to trade. No wonder that here the earliest inhabitants of Holland, of whom history speaks, built their first huts and tents. The name of the country was transferred to its denizens; they were called *Bat-ouwer*, which, gradually changing into *Bataver* or *Batavier*, soon became the name by which the Dutch tribes together were denoted. They built their huts on little mounds to protect themselves, during the winter, against the fury of the swollen rivers. For here were, and still

are, the headquarters of the Dutch inundations, which in one week often sweep away the treasures of years, together with the "tidy farm-houses," and the richly-laden orchards that surround them, and the beautiful cattle that people the well-furnished outhouses. But here, also, grow the savoury, succulent fruits, and the soft, tender vegetables, which, sent down the Waal to Rotterdam and across the Channel to London, adorn the windows of our greengrocers, and enrich our tables with the luxuries of pie and pudding and with the dainties of a delicious desert.

To those who merely want to enjoy the beauties of the visible creation, and the marvellous effects of human skill and energy, the *Betuwe* affords in abundance what will satisfy their desire. From the ferry near Wageningen, a carriage-road leads up to the top of the dike, which from time immemorial has been built to bridle the foaming Rhine in his winter-rage. The fascinating panorama, which, from the top of the dike, spreads itself out before your amazed eyes, seems with some kind, irresistible power to compel you to descend the sloping road, and to continue your walk or drive through the elegant avenues and along the blossoming orchards and flowery meadows, which here alternate in richest variety. After, perhaps, half an hour's walk, you will reach the pretty village of Hemmen. The elegant little bridge spans a purling brook, and forms the entrance to the village. The fine Castle lies on the left with its surrounding park, the residence of the Baron van Lijnden, who is Squire of the place. The houses are tidy-looking, and fancifully painted with the Squire's heraldic colours.

Beautiful and gigantic trees line the road, and the nice little church, with its slender spire and the white-plastered parsonage at a small distance from the church peep out from the trees. All this seems to whisper that here you are entering a spot where prosperity and domestic bliss have pitched their tent. Nor will you feel disappointed on entering the houses, and indulging in a chat with their kind-hearted and simple-minded tenants. At Hemmen there are no poor; no beggar disgraces the public street, no tavern rings with the shouts of the intemperate. Such has been the condition of this happy village for upwards of half a century. It has constantly enjoyed the rare privilege of being under the administration of a well-principled noble family, which not only cared for the secular prosperity of the people inhabiting its baronial territory, but also, as much as was in its power, provided them with a pastor who knew the way to true happiness.

Such a pastor is Mr. Otto Gerhard Heldring, who, since 1827, has occupied the cheerful-looking parsonage, and preached the Gospel in the pretty church. You would think that the happy condition of his little flock is a sufficient testimony to the zeal and faithfulness with which this worthy servant of Christ has discharged his duty; and yet Hemmen forms only a very little portion of the important and highly blessed sphere of this man's extensive labours. If you pay him a visit—and you will be sure of a cordial and hospitable reception, especially if you tell him that at the foot of the Cross you have learnt to adore that love which seeks and saves the lost—he will take you to a building at a mile's distance from his parsonage, called Steenbeek, and to another called

Bethel, and to another called Talitha Kûmi, and he will show you hundreds of girls who were lost, but whom the Lord hath caused him to find and to save; and he will speak to you of the village of Hoenderloo, which was rescued from the misery of pauperism, and of the colony Anna Polowna Polder far away, in the north of the kingdom, which from a wilderness was changed into a garden; and he will also point you to Africa, and Java, and Sumatra, and Borneo, where, through his instrumentality, the Lord has spoken a word in season to the weary.

II

How Mr Heldring was prepared for the Work which his Heavenly Master had for him to do

MR. HELDRING, when a student of divinity at the University of Utrecht,—he was then twenty-one years old,—was, like many others, much disquieted by the problems which the German philosophy then was, and alas! still is, throwing before the minds of the Dutch theologians. There is a remarkable similarity between the physical and the intellectual influence of Germany upon Holland. The waters which to-day spring up in the mountains of the Hartz and the Black Forest, to-morrow are sure to wash the walls of Leyden and Utrecht, and there they deposit the sand and mud which they have carried away from the hills of Heidelberg and Bonn. So the philosophical systems and theological controversies, which



OTTO GERHARD HELDRING

from time to time spring up at the German Universities, are sure some ten or twenty years later to come down to the universities of Holland. While dying out in Germany and nearly forgotten there as old worn-out opinions, they here revive with fresh energy, not to die out so very soon, but to leave a sediment in the mind of the clergyman and the scholar, which continues through more than one generation to influence the spirit of the people. At the time when Mr. Heldring entered the University, the so-called *rationalismus vulgaris* had in Germany left the field to make room for the philosophical rationalism of Strauss and the younger school of Hegel. In Holland, however, it was still exercising its influence, and trying to turn the Christian religion into a cold system of moral doctrines. Young Mr. Heldring, being by nature endowed with an insatiable thirst for knowledge, threw himself with all the fire of his youthful energy into the whirlpool of philosophical systems, which presented themselves to his mind with all the attraction of novelty. He wandered about for a considerable time in the foggy labyrinth of Pantheism, hoping to find God in the universe through the barren process of dialectic inductions. He found not what he sought. He discovered that God was nothing so long as one supposed that everything was God.

He went to Pfalzdorf, a village in Rhenish Prussia, near Cleves, where a beloved relative conducted a thriving farm. Here, in the sound atmosphere of rural life, and under the care of a skilful physician, his body gradually regained its former energy, and his mind its usual elasticity. Still a painful feeling of emptiness, of dissatisfac-

tion, continued to vex his spirit. He would often complain to his medical man about his never-satiated thirst after knowledge. The only answer which the worthy physician each time gave was, '*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.* This proved an excellent cordial. The young man began to perceive that the true knowledge of God is not a matter of intellect, but of the heart; that, to be able to meet God, one ought not to approach Him as a philosopher, but as a child. "Take to bodily labour," his physician would say, "and meanwhile think of the great love wherewith God loveth you."

He went into the field and into the garden. The spade, the axe, the pruning-knife, and the garden-rake now became his constant companions. The beneficial effect which this occupation, while invigorating his system, also had upon his mind seemed to him quite miraculous. He felt as if he was drawing a world of new and charming ideas out of the soil he was tilling. Instead of being fenced in by piles of dusty books in a close study, he now found himself transplanted into the wide lofty temple of Nature, surrounded by the lilies of the field, the fowls of the air, and the simple-hearted rustics, those living books of God which, on one page, contain more of truth and wisdom than hundreds of volumes written by philosophers. "I spent the whole day," he writes, "among the labouring people. I became acquainted with their sufferings and pleasures. I learnt to suffer and to rejoice with them. Life became new to me under a form hitherto unknown. I discovered that it was possible to be happy without books and philosophy."

Thus he was rescued from the Scylla of proud science, but it was feared lest he should wreck upon the Charybdis of wilful nescience. Upon learning that his health was recovered, his father insisted upon his passing his examination as a candidate for the ministry. He yielded to the parental desire, though with a feeling of apathy. "My examiners," he writes, "certainly never saw a young man at their bar, who was so completely indifferent to the subjects which he had to give his opinion about, for I answered their questions from my recollection of studies which had long been dead to me. Indeed I cared so little about what I was discussing, that, at the very moment I was congratulated on my happy success, the desire rose in my mind never to take the orders for which I now had obtained licence."

Thus, by reaction he was thrown to an opposite extreme. No sooner had he received his licence as a Candidate, than he returned to the workshop. He had taken to joining and turning. A whole winter was spent among the mechanic and artisan class. He became acquainted with the life, the wants, the sufferings, and pleasures of the craftspeople in the towns and villages. He knew not then that the farm and the workshop were the universities where he should gather the knowledge he required for the work for which he was destined.

His faithful father did not leave him unstirred; but urged him to solicit a charge. Again he yielded, though reluctantly. His first attempt was at once crowned with success, and in a few months, the young farmer-joiner preached his maiden-sermon in the church of Hemmen. But that sermon, however well-intentioned, was like a

hymn played on an organ somewhat out of tune. Our young minister did not yet know the true keynote. He had discovered the poverty of human philosophy, but the riches of the Gospel were still to his eyes as if buried in a cloud.

"When I took orders," he writes, "the whole of the Betuwe was inundated. The water was just beginning to subside when I entered my parsonage. The neighbouring villages were then, or became for the greater part, vacant. I found myself in the midst of a population pressed down under hard circumstances. The clergyman of the next parish to mine requested me to do as my predecessors used— take charge of that portion of the paupers of his parish, who lived near mine. My predecessor, a noble-hearted, liberal man, had expended his munificence on such a broad scale that the poor people remembered him as their only benefactor; but, at the same time, they had got so much into the habit of begging, that they were scarce other than mendicants. Religion and morality were needed everywhere; but it was not at that time clear to me, by what means the deep misery of the human race can alone be taken away. I saw hypocrisy among the people, but no religion. I saw misery, but no sincere desire of getting rid of it. How to approach, and how to treat the people, so that they might be radically cured, I really knew not. I felt that I lacked something. It was the simple knowledge of the Gospel; it was faith."

The feeling of this want made our young pastor very unhappy. For months he would walk about musing and meditating, struggling for light and for rest. He observed

that the Creator, in order to meet the bodily wants of His creatures, had provided them with means which were unquestionable and directly at hand. One needs not to ask wherewith to satisfy a man's hunger. Bread is sure to do it. The rising of the sun is never doubtful; and if the parched fields thirst for rain, it is sure to come some day from the clouds. He often would lift up his eyes, and ejaculate, "Hast thou not also provided a true, certain, unquestionable, and obtainable means by which man's soul is sure to be made happy? Is there no bread for the inward hunger? No living water to quench the thirst of the heart?"

What a strange thing! Here was a pastor called and appointed to feed his flock, taught every branch of knowledge that was deemed indispensable for this important calling, duly examined by those who were acknowledged as experts in the matter, declared perfectly fit for his work, and provided with an honourable licence; and now that he is to begin his pastoral labours, he finds that he knows almost everything except this,—whether there exists such a thing as food for the sheep, and, if so, where to obtain it!

III.

How Pastor Heldring learnt to deal with the Poor.

THE young minister resolved to become the friend of the poor, and with such the district round about him was

teeming. When he looked through the window of his study, he could, within a circle of three miles in diameter, number fourteen spires of villages. Many of these consisted chiefly of miserable huts, which at that time had suffered dreadfully from the inundation. On visiting them he found that they literally contained nothing. They were built of clay, tied up with straw. Most of them had halfway collapsed, having been washed away, or destroyed by the flood. A mattress stuffed with chaff was a rare thing, a chair or bench still rarer. This was a misery which quite perplexed the young clergyman. At Zevenaar, his birthplace, and at Pfalzdorf he had often witnessed the misery of poverty, but only with such people as were too lazy to work. Here he found a numerous population, which, even though willing to work, could find no employers. How to help here was a question which kept him musing by day and night.

It was quite clear to him that the liberality with which his wealthy predecessor had tried to succour these people was not the way to really help them. The treasures which that munificent man had spent were now lost, sunk in a bottomless pit. Perhaps, he thought, the poor people themselves may tell me how I can best help them. There are some honest fellows among them. I will go and have a talk with one of them. Maybe he may drop a word which will put the thread into my hand by which to guide these unhappy wretches out of their dreadful labyrinth.

Poor William was pointed out to him as one of the poorest, but also as one of the most honest. He went up to that man's hut, if hut it could be called. It consisted of a few sticks, planted perpendicularly in the mud,

and only at some places kept together by a texture of twisted twigs. William was not in, but his wife, with a suckling on her arm, received the "new clergyman of Hemmen" with kind reverence. Her story was soon told. Nothing to eat, and nothing to work at; her husband was away to seek for labour, but it was not likely he would find it in this over-populated country. This was at least one family willing to work. The minister spoke a word of consolation to that weary soul, and pointed to Him who chasteneth whom He loveth for their profit.

"Ay, that is the way in which my husband also speaks," said the woman, while tears came into her eyes. "We have been visited very sorely, sir. Two years ago our first calf died, and last year our second; and our third and last died a week since. And, when I could not help crying, my husband said, 'Don't cry, Mary, it is the Lord's doing; suppose you had died, or I, or our child!'"

"Then, do you think a calf would be something towards helping you?" asked the minister.

The woman enthusiastically answered in the affirmative, and clearly showed him how such a little creature might be the beginning of their prosperity.

"Tell your husband to buy a calf," quoth the minister, "I will give him the money."

No sooner was the report spread that William had got a calf from the minister, than the whole neighbourhood ran out to Mr. Heldring's house to request the same favour, for everybody thought that he could not refuse the one what he had granted to the other. Of course he could not think of this; but he resolved to put them to

the test. The season now had proceeded so far that many of them were earning wages every day. He offered to buy a calf for each of them, if they would every week bring him a few pence, till a portion of the price was saved. This offer was accepted with acclamation, but only one of them kept his word. It was William's mother-in-law, who could not allow her daughter to be richer than herself. Some weeks elapsed, and soon old Jakob (that was the woman's husband's name) rejoiced in the possession of a fine calf. This example set his neighbours athinking seriously. They saw that frugality and honesty were at least something. Gradually others went up to the parsonage to deposit their "calf's-pence." Mr. Heldring's house became a regular Savings-bank.

Meanwhile spring came on, and covered the fields with flowers, the trees with blossoms. A lovely morning called the minister out to a walk. He passed through a quarter where a row of poor huts lined the road. The appearance of one of them attracted his attention. It had a look of prosperity about it which strangely contrasted with the desolate condition of the rest. The ground round about it was tilled, and a nice tidy little garden before the door seemed to kindly invite him to enter. He could not resist the invitation, and was truly amazed at what he saw!

"Why do you breed so many cattle?" I asked the peasant.

"I earn my day-wages from the farmer over there," he replied, pointing through the window at a house opposite his; "but if we were to live upon those alone, my dear

sir, we should soon run about in rags, and starve. So I must try to earn something besides."

"Very well," I answered; "but how do you get your grass in summer, and your hay in winter?"

Mr. Heldring now learnt that this industrious man had not one inch of ground to drive his cattle upon, or to reap hay from. The produce of his garden and of the small piece of ground near his hut, which he cultivated with his own hands in his leisure hours, had enabled him to save the nice amount of living stock that peopled his thrashing-floor.

"Look here," said Mr. Heldring to himself, "this is another source of prosperity, which the people should learn to turn to profit."

He at once went to the neighbouring huts, and asked the people why they did not till the ground like their neighbour. They shrugged their shoulders.

"What is the use of digging up the soil?" they said; "we have not one potato to plant. The flood has carried off everything."

"Very well," the minister replied, "dig up your soil, and I will provide you with planting-potatoes."

The people set out to work at once. But no sooner was it reported that the clergyman of Hemmen had helped them, than a swarm of other people applied for the same favour. What was he to do? Moved with compassion for these half-naked, emaciated people, he ordered them to till their ground, and pledged himself to provide for the rest. Then he took his staff, and spent a few days in collecting at the houses of the affluent people in the neighbourhood. Before a fortnight elapsed, all the

gardens of the district were tilled, and the families hopefully looking out for the coming harvest.'

But new calamities were in store. A fearful epidemic broke out. There was scarcely a hut where there were not two or three sick people. Heavy rains poured down from heaven, and turned the country into a pool. The sick had to be carried away from some huts to more elevated spots, not to be drowned in the flood; and, when the deluge subsided, all the potatoes were gone, and the eagerly hoped for harvest was lost. What a dismal prospect for the coming winter!

Our good clergyman was now at his wit's end. But he committed the matter to God. The answer came soon. One morning a hawker knocked at his door; he had a large pack on his back. It was flax of a very low quality, or rather oakum, which he sold for 2½d. a pound. A thought flashed through the minister's mind. What if I could get the people to take to spinning! He bought the whole stock for a few guilders. He knew that there were some among the people who understood the trade. These took their old spinning-wheels down from the garrets, and set joyfully to work. The whole district got astir. Everybody applied for flax and spinning-wheels. New difficulties arose! Where to get the stuff and the machines! Mr. Heldring again spoke to the well-to-do inhabitants; they took a fancy to the matter. It became a regular *furore*. Every one bought a bundle of flax; every one must have a spinning family. Soon the whizzing of the wheel was heard in every hut. The winter came on; but the people could without fear look into his icy face; and Mr. Heldring, when taking a walk through the district, would

often step into a hut, and sit down, and talk to the spinning people about the faithful love with which an invisible Friend again had cared for them, and about the great happiness of those who love Him more than the best of His gifts.*

In such ways Mr. Heldring became a friend of the poor. He learnt their real position, their wants, their faults, and their virtues. He found that the best method of treating pauperism was to try to raise the people to the possession of some property, however small. "For," he would say, "as long as the poor man has no property of his own, he has no respect for his neighbour's property either."

IV.

How Mr. Heldring succeeded in providing a Barren Desert with three Fountains.

More than ten years elapsed, during which time Mr. Heldring quietly laboured on in the interesting but little-known sphere in which Providence had placed him. While he enjoyed the blessings of domestic happiness by the side of his faithful wife, and was encouraged in his benevolent exertions by the love of his flock and the gratitude of the poor, he little dreamt of his being destined for a work, which was one day to be a source of

* O. G. Heldring, *Winteravond-lectuur van pachter Gerhard.* Second Part, p. 129.

blessing for the whole kingdom, and which would even engage the attention of the chief philanthropists of Europe.

Mr. Heldring was one day sitting in a company of friends who inhabited a quarter of the Veluwe. A description was given of the vast heaths, the immense sand-deserts, and the extensive forests that characterise that barren district. The minister, knowing by experience how much trouble it required to keep poor people from starving even in the fertile fields of the Betuwe, wondered how a living soul could exist on the scanty soil of the Veluwe.

"We cannot tell," one of the company observed, "what, under God's blessing, human zeal, frugality, and common sense may bring about, even under the most unfavourable circumstances. Take, for instance, Hoenderlo. Isn't that a wonderful evidence of the power of human will?"

Mr. Heldring had never heard of Hoenderlo. He now learnt that it was a little village of from twenty to twenty-five huts, which had very recently sprung up in the middle of an immeasurable desert. A nobleman, a hundred years ago, happening to fall in with a bundle of old documents, had found that this immense heath was his property. He much desired to make a beginning of cultivation, and in a sort of whim he built there a little cottage, which he let for a trifle. Two or three families occupied it successively, but abandoned it as soon as they entered, because of the wildness of the place. At length, about twenty-five years ago, a bold fellow ventured to settle there for good. He set his face like a flint against all the hard-

ships and difficulties he had to go through, and after some time succeeded in establishing a pretty nice farm. His example told upon his friends; one of them, taking courage, built a hut of sods and twigs. A third one joined, and thus, after a few years, a little village sprang up. Then, one of the immigrants happened to be a brick-maker. He found a track of ground in the neighbourhood which contained clay; his bricks turned out tolerably good, and thus gradually a few huts were changed into brick houses. Gardens were laid out in the old-fashioned Dutch style, with square beds hemmed in with box. Rye and wheat and oats were sown, cabbages and potatoes planted. Thus gradually an oasis arose in the midst of this wilderness.

"I must see that remarkable village," Mr. Heldring said to himself. "People take an interest in a Dutch colony, started in Iowa, U. S. of North America,* and in another colony established at Macassar; but here is a colony in the very vicinity of our own homes, and we do not know of it! We ought to be ashamed of ourselves!"

He prevailed upon a friend to accompany him to the place, which was about twenty miles distant from his home. They chose to walk, as they wanted to make the acquaintance of a Veluwe heath. A guide was soon found, and so they set out one summer morning of 1839. After an hour's walk they found themselves at the entrance of a plain, which, like the ocean, was only limited by the horizon. It was a desert of sand, dotted here and there

* It was about that time that the Rev Mr. Scholten conducted a colony of Dutch people to Iowa, one of the youngest States of North America, while Mr. Freys tried to prepare an emigration of Dutch farmers to Macassar, which, however, I am sorry to say, turned out a failure.

with knolls or mounds covered with heather. A fresh gale blew from the south-west; the sand, thrown up by the wind, often wrapped them in a cloud which seemed almost impenetrable. With their eyes shut and their hands before their faces, they stepped on blindfolded. They felt as if with a magic rod they had been transplanted into the Desert of Zahara. Every now and then they were compelled to lie down behind a knoll to draw breath. At last their walk consisted merely of short runs from knoll to knoll. Thus fighting against the wind and the sand, into which they often sank half-way up to the knees, and opening their eyes only with twinklings not to lose their course, they succeeded in gaining a couple of hills, from the top of which another immense heath extended before the view. Hoenderlo emerged at a short distance. It looked like an island in the ocean. Still this heath was not so barren as that which they had crossed. They could now walk on with open eyes. "Never," Mr. Heldring writes, "never did we see a finer heath. The oak-copse, which here and there was still extant, proved that in ancient days this plain must have been covered with an immense forest. But man, in his wicked and foolish selfishness, has here also proved the greatest destroyer. These vast barren deserts are his work; for having cut away the forest, he had left the soil alone. And thus the ground, which had been kept moist under the shade of the trees, had turned dry and arid. Parched by the burning sun, it became full of cracks. The wind then broke it up altogether, and, hunting the sand over the plain, turned this once so fertile district into a wilderness."

The first hut they entered was that of a poor widow. She received the strangers with kind surprise. A visit of gentlemen to this *ultima Thule* was counted as a white raven. She told them all they wanted to know about the origin and the present condition of the place. Providence evidently had brought her here to save her and her family from starvation. Behind her hut were a few acres covered with wheat and rye, the blessed produce of her and her children's industry. While walking with the strangers along the crops, she took a bundle of ears between her hands, and showing them to her visitors, she said, her face beaming with pleasure, "Look here, sirs, isn't our Lord a wonderful God? Only a few years ago this spot was a bare wilderness, and now He has made it a garden to feed the widow and her children."

Upon inquiry they found that the people of this place, though not altogether destitute of religious knowledge, were yet, on the whole, very ignorant about the highest concerns of their souls. Indeed, with only a few exceptions, they were a set of robbers and poachers, and many of them used to spend a portion of the year in the prison at Arnheim. There were some of the immigrants who had brought a Bible with them, but there was neither a church nor anything like public service. The clergyman of the neighbouring village, it was true, tried to assist them through the medium of a Catechist, whom he had instructed on purpose. Some of the people returned this kind pastoral care by walking, weather permitting, several miles to attend worship at his church. But only a very few could partake of these privileges, and the whole of

the population might be considered as shut out from the blessings of the Gospel.

"You see," said the woman, "God hath blessed us far beyond what we could think or pray; but still we are in need of three important things,—a well, a school, and a church."

"Why, have you no well hereabout? How do you get your water?"

"That's often a very difficult question, sir. We put tubs between the hills, and thus try to gather the rain that filters through the sand. But in the dry season, we are often without a drop, and are compelled to walk several miles to the neighbouring village to fetch a pot full."

"Dear me! That must take away a great deal of the people's time, and hamper them very much in their labour."

"Of course it does. But still this is not our greatest misery. The most urgent thing we are in need of is a school. We should less care for walking miles every day for water, if only our children were provided with instruction."

They took leave of the good woman.

"Indeed," Mr. Heldring said to his friend, while walking through the village, "this is a spot worth our warmest sympathy. Preferring a school to a well proves a good spirit. I wonder whether it is the spirit of the whole population. Let us put it to the test."

They entered a grocer's. Seating himself on a salt-bag, Mr. Heldring began a chat with the shopkeeper. All the woman had told was confirmed by this man; he also gave a most touching description of the misery the people had

often to suffer from want of water. Yet, if he were to choose between the two, he would choose a school."*

Mr. Heldring returned home, his mind quite made up not to leave a stone unturned till those people were in the possession of a well, a school, and a church. He travelled to the towns in the vicinity of his place of residence, and brought the matter under the attention of the wealthy class of the province. He began with the well, as this, of the three objects, was the least expensive. Soon he obtained the required amount, and not many months elapsed before Hoenderlo saw its denizens joyfully drawing up the precious crystal from the deep veins of the earth. Then the active minister travelled to Amsterdam and the Hague and Rotterdam, to speak to Christian friends upon the subject of the school and the church. Not to put too many irons in the fire at one time, he resolved to begin with establishing a Christian sewing-school, for which he knew an excellent teacher. The day-school was sure to follow, as soon as a good Christian schoolmaster was found. To find such a one, however, was matter of no small concern. Only self-denying love could impel an individual to emigrate to such a remote miserable hamlet, in the midst of a desert, where the salary would be as scanty as the conversation would be limited. This may account for the discouraging delay which Mr. Heldring met with in his endeavours. Nearly eight years elapsed before he could intimate to his friends that the school was finished, and Mr. and Mrs. Gangel engaged in teaching.

Mr. Gangel was a schoolmaster and a man of Christian

* See *Geldersche Volksalmanak* of 1840, pp. 21-36.

principles. Just about the time when Mr. Heldring succeeded in gathering the required amount for building a school, Mr. Gangel found himself in great difficulties, owing to the Dutch School Bill having been recently carried in Parliament prohibiting the reading of the Bible, and any religious teaching whatever, if parties should differ. The Roman Catholics of the place had required the abolition of the Bible-reading. Mr. Gangel, from conscience, could not obey. He was suspended, and, with his wife and children, deprived of his bread. No sooner had he made Mr. Heldring's acquaintance than they became friends. Mr. Gangel was appointed teacher of the Hoenderlo school, and before he could open his day-school, his wife had already commenced her sewing-school. Thus the second object was reached. Hoenderlo now became an attractive spot to many a struggling master of a family. The population rapidly increased. Not much eloquence was required to convince every one that this was a place where a church should be built. There were sufficient grounds to solicit the Government grant. Some Christians in good circumstances put down their donations, and soon the people of Hoenderlo enjoyed the blessing of worshipping their Saviour in their own temple, under their own minister and pastor.

V.

How Mr Heldring was confirmed in the conviction that an Asylum is better than a Prison.

By these exertions on behalf of the needy and the destitute, Mr. Heldring became generally known as a friend of the poor, and it became more and more clear to himself that God had destined him for a sphere of labour, for which few have talent, and still fewer inclination. In consequence of his frequent travelling through the kingdom, and of his intercourse with different classes of people, he obtained a knowledge of the condition of the population, which to his mind was quite alarming. He found that, while the church was sunk into the lethargy of rationalism and indifference, vice and immorality were making frightful progress. Prostitution, licensed by the Government and under the supervision of the police, not only crowded the back streets of the large towns with brothels, but also established its hotels at the fashionable quarters. Next to nothing was being tried to stem the tide of this pernicious flood. The thought grew and ripened in Mr. Heldring's mind, that, in the hand of God, he might be an instrument for the good of those unhappy creatures. He met with many well-principled and liberal-minded people in the various towns of Holland, who had a great desire to succour the neglected children, the young prisoners, and the fallen girls, but did not know how to do it. The great difficulty was to find a fit place where they could be sent, and fit people

to whose care they could be committed. It is true, there was a "Society for the Moral Improvement of Prisoners," but this only cared for one branch of the fallen class; it did not receive the abandoned child, the neglected youth, and the prostitute. Besides it was a purely philanthropic institution possessed of a capital of about £8000,* the annual interest of which it devoted to restoring released convicts to a position in society. This work, however good in itself, was not what the orthodox friends of Mr. Heldring wanted. Nor did he want it himself. He desired to place the neglected and the fallen, whether convicts or not, under the care of decidedly Christian people. He thought of Hoenderlo and of the small farmers round about Hemmen, among whom he knew so many families which, for a small remuneration, would be happy to admit a lost soul to the Christian intercourse of their domestic life. His mind was soon made up. He took charge of a few girls and boys, for whom benevolent friends were glad to pay the boarding. He placed some of the girls with Mrs. Gangel, and the rest were boarded with Christian families in the neighbourhood of Hemmen.

While this labour, which, with only a few exceptions, promised the most gratifying result, filled Mr. Heldring's heart with grateful joy, it enabled him at the same time to cast a glance into the depths of the social evil of Holland. He studied the biographies of the unhappy creatures who were intrusted to his care, and found that several of them had passed through the prison for female convicts at Gouda. This prison, which afterwards was

* *Vereeniging Chr Stemmen*, 1847, p. 501.

removed to the town of Woerden, is the only prison for females in Holland. He found that they were not only the most difficult individuals to manage well, but that it was in many cases injudicious to introduce them into respectable families, especially if there were children. He resolved to pay a visit to the Gouda prison. It is very interesting to read what he wrote about that visit in 1847. Perhaps it will not be deemed out of place to quote a few sentences here.

"On entering the Gouda prison I expected to see some of those wicked women, who, having sunk beneath the lowest pitch of humanity in houses of immorality, try in their turn to seduce others, as they themselves had been seduced. I expected to find them engaged in the horrible plan of weaving a network of devilish artifice round the fatherless and homeless girls, deceiving them with promises of an easy and idle life, of beautiful dresses, of opulent dinners and suppers, and of a gay wanton conversation. My expectation, alas! proved too correct. I found among others a wretched woman, too well known to the police as a seducer of poor girls, sitting among other women and girls. She was quite at liberty to speak and to act as she liked, now as an invalid at the infirmary, now as healthy among the healthy. She purposed, when released, to establish a large brothel at the Hague. She was now recruiting among the young girls who surrounded her."

Mr. Heldring then relates how, without the slightest hesitation on the part of the overseers, such wicked females were allowed to mingle with other convicts who, though guilty of some crime, yet had not sunk so deep

as they. He found infanticides, incendiaries, clippers, thieves, perjurers; but how many perhaps were there who, only in a feeling of despair, or under the influence of strong drink, or from some momentary impulse, had, for the first time in their life committed a crime which they now regretted! These poor inexperienced things were sent to this place as to an academy of sin, where they could study the art and science of vice in all its extent, depth, and ramifications!

Five girls at once, upon learning who he was, entreated him to have mercy upon them. One, a Roman Catholic girl, had in vain applied to her priest. "Dear sir," she said, "what am I to do? That woman yonder has requested me to establish a brothel at the Hague at her expense, in my own name, since hers is in disrepute; but I have declined. No other way is left to me but to take to begging, in order that the police may send me to the beggars' colony. This will only take me for one year, and what then?"

This settled Mr. Heldring's mind.

"I will undertake the great work," he wrote at the close of his touching report; "I will undertake the establishment of an asylum for such girls, to train them for every kind of useful labour; for he who will not work neither shall he eat. But more than this—I will undertake to build this house, in order to lead the girls to Him, who forgave much to Mary of Magdala, so that she loved Him with an unspeakable joy.

"I have hitherto boarded released convict girls with honest respectable families; but I find nothing good can come out of it unless there be a central house from which

everything proceeds. I want a Christian woman as a directress of that house, with whom the girls may be placed during the first two or three months at least. She must be the faithful mother of all, the tender nurse of the sick, and the counsellor of those who are wandering astray. She, knowing them all, may tell us which of them are fit for servants, which for our Colonies in the East, etc."

Mr. Heldring's declining to have anything to do with the Society for Moral Improvement, which proceeded on a merely moral basis, appealed to the people, and met with the most fervent sympathy of the Christians in Holland. He was so powerfully countenanced in his designs, that his success far surpassed his expectation. How this came about I will endeavour to show in the following chapter.

VI.

The History of the Foundation of the Steenbeek Asylum

JUST at the time Mr. Heldring was musing about the foundation of an Asylum, the Magdalen question, independently of him, was urgently brought under the attention of a few friends at Amsterdam. They happened one evening to be sitting together in company with two medical professors who had the charge of two or three public hospitals. These related several touching instances of fallen women, who, while under their medical treatment, had shown a contrite spirit and an earnest desire to return

to the way of virtue. "But what can we do in the matter?" asked the professors, in a tone of distress; "we do not know a place to send them to, and we have neither the means nor the time to provide for them."

They put their hands together in prayerful love, and a Society was formed for "raising penitent fallen women." Two or three ministers of different denominations gladly joined the Society; but it was deemed judicious not to give publicity to the matter. The Society wanted to avoid any appearance whatever of sympathy with a system of organising prostitution. It was dreaded lest by publishing the existence of such a Society, hypocrisy might be promoted and true repentance counteracted. So the Society began its operations with as much prudence and secresy as possible. When a repenting girl was found, steps were taken to reconcile her with her parents. If fatherless and motherless, she was boarded out with an aged widow without family, or apprenticed as a servant with benevolent people either in or outside the metropolis. Her instruction in the knowledge of the Scriptures was permanently cared for, and she was trained for any useful work or trade she displayed talent in.

While these operations were still in their commencement, it happened one day, that the two founders and most influential members of this Society fell in with Mr. Heldring on a journey. As they knew that he was a man whose experience and knowledge of Christian philanthropy deserved their full confidence, they entered into a conversation with him about the object of their Society. Much to their joy they learnt that this was exactly a matter which engaged all his thoughts and desires. He,

however, at once declared his firm opinion that an asylum was the first thing needed. He did not at all disapprove of the course taken by the Society; but he showed that in many cases it could not answer the purpose. The boarding of girls come so recently out of a life of sin and disorder might prove in many instances deleterious to the persons or families that took them in. Nor could private families, dwelling in a large populous city like Amsterdam, guard them sufficiently against frequent temptations. Besides, strict seclusion for some time was, in his opinion, absolutely required to enable them to test the sincerity of their repentance, and to accustom them to a life diametrically opposed to their former practices. They ought to be brought under the constant influence of the Gospel, whose tender whispers, inviting them to come to a merciful and loving Saviour, could be far better heard in the quiet abode of a Christian asylum somewhere in a remote corner of the country, than in the bustle of a noisy city. Mr. Heldring concluded by saying that it would perhaps be as well to try both ways, and should individuals be found ready to test *his* plan, he expressed himself willing to join them.

Such individuals were not far away. The two gentlemen at once declared themselves prepared to countenance the clergyman in his benevolent design. Another Christian friend joined them with cordial sympathy; and the four gentlemen resolved to leave no stone unturned till an asylum was erected for the unhappy females of Holland. Mr. Heldring thankfully acknowledged this providential meeting as a Divine answer to his fervent prayers; for, as far as regarded wealth and influence, no

better allies could have been chosen for the noble battle he was about to fight.

The first thing to be looked for now was a suitable building. Scarcely a mile's walk from his house, and about equally distant from any highway, a little farm-house lifted its humble roof in midst of a nice little grove. Originally it had been built for a brewery, called "the Duck," and in consequence contained tolerably large rooms. After its transformation into a farmhouse it had changed its name into that of *Steenbeek* (Stone-brook), after a little rivulet that gently purled along its wall. Through an unexpected concurrence of circumstances Mr. Heldring had some years before become the owner of that place. It was contrary to his wish that he had accepted it. He felt that meddling with the letting and repairing of houses was not a proper business for him. Still, he let the place of course; but at as short leases as possible, since he resolved to use it for some philanthropic purpose, as soon as an opportunity should occur. The opportunity had now presented itself. No better spot could be imagined for an asylum for fallen girls. Its quiet, solitary situation perfectly guarded it against the inspection of the curious and indiscreet. Yet the lively, rural scenery round about prevented any idea of a dull convent-like seclusion. The house was built in a simple but cheerful style. Its white-plastered walls beautifully contrasted with the verdure of the surrounding trees, through which it shone at a distance. A kitchen-garden and an orchard offered plenty of opportunity both for wholesome labour and healthy refreshment. A little grove protected the place from the burning sun in

summer, and from the cutting wind in winter. A clear little brook adorned the lovely landscape, as a mirror adorns a family-parlour. Mr. Heldring now saw why, at the time, this undesired place became his property. One of the above-mentioned gentlemen came down to inspect it. He at once offered a donation of two thousand florins for fitting it up, if Mr. Heldring would let it for the purpose. Could he for one moment refuse such offers?

Another important question, perhaps the most important of all, now addressed itself to Mr. Heldring's mind: where to find a fit Christian woman who was as able as willing to take her place at the head of the Establishment? A great amount of self-denying Christian love ought to characterise the person who would leave her friends and relatives in order to spend her life in this solitary spot, with unhappy creatures, whose company would be so disgusting to the feelings and so troublesome to the mind. Very probably many a good woman might be found among the middle class, who, obeying the impulse of Christian compassion, and enticed by the prospect of a comfortable situation, would be glad to quit a monotonous and struggling life in town for some useful and well-paying employment in the country. But this was not what Mr. Heldring wanted. He perceived that the idea of self-support and comfort would prove adverse to the necessary practice of self-denial. He was aware that the nearer the directress approached to the inmates by her social position the less would be the force of her moral influence. He looked out for some lady of a respectable position in

life, who at the same time would count it an honour to be, through the grace of God, the guide of the least respectable.

One day he travelled to Utrecht, to visit the Establishment of the Deaconesses, which adorns that city of the old Bishops. A lady was on a visit there who made a deep impression on his mind. It was as if an inward voice said to him, "This is the person you are seeking for." He found that she was a member of one of the aristocratic families of Amsterdam, and that it was her delight to visit the poor, the needy, and the afflicted. He spoke to her about the Asylum, and the want of a Christian woman, who would take the charge of it. And a few months later (in January, 1848), Miss Voute went down to Steenbeek, to address herself to the important task for which she was convinced Providence had destined her. Sixteen years have since elapsed. Miss Voute is still at the head of the Establishment, a true mother to its inmates, and Mr. Heldring's right hand. This excellent Christian lady has during all these years performed a task which, though little spoken of in public, requires more skill, self-control, and courage than many an exploit trumpeted in the annals of heroism, and rewarded with the ribbon of knighthood. She has not only thrown her whole heart and soul into the work, sacrificing her day's pleasures and her night's rest to the wellbeing of the unhappy females, but she has also given a considerable portion of her property towards building a wing of the Establishment, and for fitting it up in such a way as her experience had taught her would best answer the wants of an institution of this kind. Truly, grateful love to the

Saviour joyfully exclaims, "All I *am* and all I *have* is Thine!"

The Asylum now began to grow in the confidence of the public. Many philanthropists were glad to know a place to which they could send the objects of their compassionate care. To put the Asylum in direct and permanent correspondence with all the districts of the kingdom Mr. Heldring visited the chief towns, and established auxiliary societies. To secure the undisturbed operation of the Establishment he united with thirteen gentlemen to form a corporation which was recognised by the State. Among these, five were ministers of various denominations in the chief towns of the kingdom; five were lawyers; three were merchants of the highest standing in society; and one was a nobleman. To this corporation he sold the property. A capital of 15,000 florins (£1250) was raised on a loan without interest. Of such capital one-fifth was used for the enlarging and fitting up of apartments; Miss Voute having begun her labour with ten girls, to whom during the year 1848–49 fourteen were added. To enable the corporation to repay the loan an appeal for donations and annual subscriptions was issued which everywhere met with the greatest sympathy. The boarding and lodging of a girl was fixed at £8, 12s. 4d. a year, besides £4, 3s. 4d. as entry. This money was to be paid by the Auxiliary Societies, or by any one who wanted to save a fallen soul, through the instrumentality of the Asylum. By means of these wise arrangements the Establishment not only proved able to support itself in spite of the expense which every year increased, but also to clear off the whole of its debt within six or seven years.

VII

The Organisation and Spirit of the Steenbeck Asylum

THE Steenbeek Asylum is situated upon the territory of the village of Zetten, which is a mile's walk from Hemmen. From Zetten a sandy country road leads up to the Asylum grounds, which contain between seven and eight acres of arable land, and are surrounded by the brook. Having entered the simple wooden gate you find a bell to announce your arrival. Steps approach from the inside. A bolt is removed, and the door of the Establishment is opened by a female. You observe that you cannot enter unnoticed; but nothing prevents the inmates from leaving the house whenever they like. This arrangement is characteristic of the spirit of the Institution. The world is prevented from coming in; the inhabitants are at liberty to walk out.

You find yourself in the shade of several premises clustering together, in a rather irregular form. You perceive that an old brewery turned into an Asylum could not produce a masterpiece of architecture. Still the two new portions of the building which form the Asylum properly so called are got up in a cheerful, regular style, in which taste and simplicity are ably combined. A barn and a stable border upon them; and only a few steps farther on two farm-houses, which are let to trustworthy people, protect the Asylum from the north-west wind. The whole is surrounded by a kitchen-garden and two orchards, which again are shut in by a

meadow and several pieces of arable land. No unnecessary trees disfigure this lovely spot. The sun cheerfully illuminates the pretty landscape; and the country air can at any time be allowed to ventilate the rooms and passages of the Establishment. The inmates can easily enjoy a refreshing walk, without being the objects of indiscreet inspection; and there is also plenty of opportunity for useful labour. There are the milk-house, the garden, the fields, the stable, with its fine cattle, and the hay-barn, all destined for the instruction and exercise of such girls as are being trained for the farm. There is the spacious laundry or washing-house, with all the required apparatus, not only for washing the clothes of the inmates of the house, but the fine linen of the families of the neighbourhood, which demands great skill



Steenbeek.

and care. There is the lofty kitchen with its various utensils for the instruction of future cooks; the comprehensive pantry, too, where the winter provisions are kept, from the indispensable sauer-kraut down to the cucumber and the gerkin, all dressed and preserved, and pickled by the girls themselves. Close to it are the bakehouse and the thrashing-barn. Over these again are the lofts for the drying and preparing of the tobacco, which forms a considerable portion of the annual crops. Then come the infirmary, the dining-room, the dormitories, and two large rooms occupied by those girls who are learning to make mats, or who have to repair the dresses of the household. From one of these rooms you enter through a short passage, into the simply but tastefully furnished dwelling-rooms of Miss Voute, and the six ladies who assist her in her important labour. Here those girls who evince a talent for a higher grade of service than that of the farm or the kitchen are trained as chamber maids and ladies' maids. A little house adjacent is for the reception of the new-comers, who dwell there till they are deemed fit for the company of those who occupy the larger house. In the centre of all these apartments there is the charming prayer-saloon, where every morning and evening the whole household meets for worship, and which serves as a chapel for Mr. Heldring on Sunday afternoon. It is fittingly placed in the centre, to remind the members of this numerous family, as it were, that the knowledge and fear of the Lord are the root and fountain of all that is taught and practised within these walls.

Into this admirably-arranged Institution more than

400 fallen women have been received since 1848. Its spacious apartments (which are capable of lodging sixty individuals, the directress and her assistants and servants not included) at present (1864) give shelter and refuge to between forty and fifty. We have already observed that while the world is shut out from this place nothing like compulsion is noticeable inside. The all-ruling principle upon which Mr. Heldring has based the Institution, is that of perfect Christian liberty. This, however, is not to be understood in a sense at variance with the principles of order and decency. Common rules are prescribed to the whole household, to which every member must submit. Among the articles there are some which in other families would seem rather despotic, but here are judicious and beneficial. The girls, for instance, must promise never to take a walk outside the Establishment; nor are they permitted to go to church at any of the neighbouring villages on Sunday; they must worship in the house. Much sagacity is not required to perceive the necessity of these and similar limitations for young girls of such a class, whose free intercourse with the population of the neighbourhood could not fail to lead them into temptations as injurious to themselves as to the villagers. Although they are free to leave the house at any time of the day, they are locked in their bedrooms during the night. Prudence has taught the necessity of this measure. A common dormitory would be a dangerous place for girls of this kind. Each one has her own little bedroom, just large enough to contain a bed, a washstand, a press, a chair, and sufficient space to walk a step or two. These bed-

rooms open into a common passage, at each end of which one of the assistant ladies has hers. The little windows are placed so near the ceiling as only to let in light from above. The doors have no handles inside; and when the girls have entered their bedrooms the assistants turn the keys outside. Thus, whatever whim or freak may occur to them, they are prevented from jumping out of the window, or from visiting the neighbouring bedrooms, to disturb their companions. But the walls and doors are so thin that in case of an accident their cries can be heard at once. Strange to say, the girls, instead of complaining of this sort of imprisonment, are highly pleased with it. When, by mistake, the assistant-lady forgets to lock a door, the occupant will cry, "Please ma'am, will you lock me up?"

The inmates of the Asylum are early risers. Winter and summer, the clock striking five turns, as it were with a magic rod, the silence of night into the merry bustle of day. The girls require no light in winter for dressing. Simply clothed as they are, they know how to manage everything by the touch. Family worship, conducted by one of the ladies, opens and sanctifies the day for its work. Four meals unite the girls around the family-table: breakfast at 8; dinner at 12; tea at 5; supper at 8. Then the evening prayer prepares them for the rest which is asked from God to fit them for fresh duties.

The work for which the girls are trained is arranged in an order progressing from the lower to the higher. Mr. Heldring thus desires to operate upon the ambition of the girls. Ambition, if it start merely from the desire of earning the praise of men, and if connected with the

unkind intention of putting a rival to shame, is a bad passion, for which no room should be allowed in a Christian Establishment. If, however, it springs from the desire of excelling in everything good and noble, and if connected with the hope of thus stimulating others to greater energy and higher accomplishments, ambition is not only indispensable in a perfect system of education, but is even strongly recommended in Scripture. What else can be the meaning of the allusion of the Apostle to the heathen games, in which "every man strove for the mastery, and tried to obtain the prize?" Mr. Heldring, at all events, has not hesitated to introduce that principle as a means of exciting the energy of the girls in the discharge of their duties, and in the development of their talents. The new-comers are first placed in the matting-room. This is the lowest degree in the ascending scale of work. All the girls must learn to make mats, because it is the simplest and cheapest way of earning a livelihood, and straw can be obtained everywhere. Those who by their behaviour and labour excel most are promoted to the sewing room, then to light garden-work. After that they may assist in the kitchen; and, if they behave well here, they are raised to the rank of regular cooks and housemaids. The highest grade is that of chamber-maid and lady's-maid. To be degraded to a lower degree is counted a severe punishment. Those who are refractory are put to mat-making. If obstinate, no other choice is left to them but to submit or to leave the house. Bodily chastisement is never resorted to. If one of the girls should desire to leave the house, she is put into a small room, void of furniture, except a bench and a Bible. Here

she must spend one day in solitude before carrying her sad resolution into practice. Then some of the best and kindest girls are sent in from time to time to speak to her. The ladies also come in at short intervals. In most cases this proves sufficient to make her repent and give up her plan. If she continues obstinate, Mr. Heldring speaks to her. He very seldom fails in putting a stop to her bad temper.

It does not lie in Mr. Heldring's system of training to address a girl often in person, in order to examine the religious state of her soul, and to speak to her about the necessity of her conversion. Experience has taught him prudence in this respect. Such personal addresses easily lead to the very opposite of what is aimed at. Disguise and hypocrisy are common faults with many of these unhappy creatures. They like to avail themselves of a religious conversation, in order to deceive their teachers in their favour, and to hasten their promotion to a higher degree, or to some desirable situation. Others plume themselves upon being the objects of special personal addresses. They suppose they must be something extraordinary, because worth such special attention. With many of these females the feelings predominate over the intellect. When examined about the state of their souls, they like to indulge in a sentimental account of the various frames and feelings they have gone through, and often take the personal address with which they are favoured for a special token of God, that He has accepted them in mercy. They henceforth consider themselves as converted, while, in fact, their so-called conversion is only in their feelings, not a change of their heart.

While kind Christian love, is the all-moving power through which the life at Steenbeek, as a family life, is regulated, the great truth is not lost sight of, that justice and holiness are the inseparable ornaments of that love. On my visit to the Institution, I was struck with the spirit of earnestness and gravity which seemed to characterise the family. Not that I received an impression that its members felt unhappy. I could not observe one face that betrayed discontent or grief. All seemed to be at their ease, and to move about in a quiet natural way, without any sign of uncomfortable feeling. Nothing reminded one of the law, or the uplifted finger, or the frown. But there was a certain composure about the whole company, which reminded me that this was not a school of innocent happy children, but an Asylum of fallen women, who had tasted the bitter cup of sin. Everything that might cause them to think that their coming to this place was considered as a favour, is avoided. Mr. Heldring receives them with kind sympathy, but at the same time makes them feel that Christ's saving love is a holy, and, in many instances, a *hard* love. A bad word or deed is never connived at; a manifestation of a bad inclination is never indulged. The door is, as it were, left open; they must either depart from iniquity, or leave the House. Mr. Heldring calls this the principle of "shaking off the dust." In his opinion this principle ought to characterise the London Magdalen Institutions to a greater extent than he found it did, on his visit to them in 1861.

In that year, which was the fifteenth of Steenbeek's existence, 427 girls had been taken in since its founda-

tion. Of these 352 had left the House, of whom 131 were known to the Direction as saved, if not all of them for the Kingdom of Heaven, at least for society on earth. "The result of all Magdalen Institutions in Europe," Mr. Heldring writes, "is confirmed also in our country. We see that one out of three is saved, leaving the way of sin for good; the second keeps staggering; the third falls back to her former life. At this moment there are forty girls in the Asylum. The difference of the three classes is visible already. Some show that they are really thankful to be rescued; their conduct evinces a grateful heart; their work is good; their desire of hearing God's Word, in order to find consolation, strength, and courage, through Christ, increases every day. Others are always doubting and staggering. With them it is a constant up and down, sometimes very good, sometimes very bad. A third class is obstinate, and continues hardened. Of all these one can already with almost infallible certainty foretell what their subsequent life will be."

VIII

The Foundation and Organisation of Talitha Kûmi

APPLICATIONS soon increased to such an extent that Mr. Heldring furnished a small house near Steenbeek as an Asylum, and it was soon peopled with twenty children. But it was found ere long that a regular Establishment was

absolutely necessary. No sooner had Mr. Heldring acquainted his friends with this want, than help came from all quarters. As early as the year 1856 about 8400 florins (£700) poured in for the purchase of a piece of land of about eight acres, adjacent to the grounds of Steenbeek; the next year 17,650 florins (£1470) were liberally contributed for the building of the premises; and in 1858, again, 5814 florins (£485) were given for the fitting-up of the whole. The place was called *Talitha Kûmi.* As the daughter of Jairus was brought back to life by these powerful words of the Saviour, so here many a poor lost girl, it was prayerfully hoped, would be raised from the death of sin, by that same Redeemer's quickening spirit.

Separated from the public road by a little rivulet, the simple but handsome premises lift up their neat, white-plastered, two-storied frame in the midst of a charming garden, through a portion of which the visitor has to pass before reaching the front door. They form a regular square. The centre is occupied by a spacious yard, into which the back windows of all the apartments look. This is an imitation of the mediæval convents and schools, which evidently were built in this way for facilitating survey and control. The yard is the play-ground for the children, and is at the same time used for every kind of out-door work. So, whether playing or working, the children are always in sight of Miss Nieuwveen, the able directress, and her assistant-ladies, whose apartments form a portion of the front wing. The other wings are occupied by spacious school and sewing rooms, dining and work rooms, kitchen, laundry, washhouse, etc. The

dormitories, each containing about thirty beds, are upstairs. What struck me very much, when passing through these apartments, was their loftiness, cleanliness, and perfect ventilation. Owing to the spacious square yard in the centre, each apartment has its front and back windows; so that, on both sides, a profuse abundance of light and air can be let in. "Children are like flowers," Mr. Heldring said to me, "if you want them to grow and to thrive, you must give them joyful sunshine, and a fresh breeze."

Talitha has accommodation for 150 girls. At present it is almost full. On one occasion it was so crowded that Mr. Heldring had to establish a third building, called *Bethel*, a few steps from Talitha. Of this Establishment, which is chiefly destined for released convicts, and neglected girls above 16 and under 21 years, I will speak by and by. Talitha takes children from six to sixteen. It commenced its operations with forty children in September 1857. Some of the children had been in prison twice over. Some had escaped that punishment, because they had only robbed their own parents. Some were by compassionate individuals rescued from the hand of the police, and sent up to this place for reform. Some were found begging on the public road, more like brutes than human beings. How to transform this chaos of disgusting confusion into a paradise of order and peace, was a question not easy to solve. Still Mr. Heldring and the ladies, who with him were resolved to address themselves to this noble task, were of good cheer. They bore in mind that the God, in whose name they undertook the work, was the same who had changed

the *Thohu* and *Bohu* of old into the happy garden of Eden.

One of the first principles adopted was to make the girls work as much as possible, and to teach them various kinds of labour. The system which, with scarcely an exception, prevailed in the Dutch Orphan-houses—that of dividing the life of the girls only between the school and the sewing-room—was discarded at once. This method of training might save the teachers much toil and trouble; but it was considered as absolutely pernicious to the pupils. Girls who have learnt nothing but to read, to write, and to sew, turn out quite unfit for domestic service. They become seamstresses, and the statistics of the large towns show the close affinity of the seamstress' life with prostitution. Accordingly some of the girls were at once put into the kitchen, some into the wash-house, some into the laundry, some into the garden, and some were ordered to clean the rooms, to serve the ladies, and to perform every kind of house-work. Of course it took an immense deal of patience and trouble to give these thoroughly ignorant and half-savage creatures merely an idea of what they were required to do. Sometimes the teachers were at their wits' end. But, as every kind of labour was taught by a clever and resolute servant, the children gradually got into the required habits, and took a fancy to the principle of order, of which for the first time in their life they experienced the benefits. When the work was done, they met in the sewing-room, and afterwards in the school-house. It was especially in the sewing-room that opportunity was taken of examining the characters of the girls, and of speaking to their hearts.

As at Steenbeek, so here, every pupil in a progressive course has to pass through every kind of work. She begins with matting and sewing, and finishes with serving the ladies as chambermaid. School-time commences at 5 P.M. Just so much of ordinary school-teaching is imparted as is required for a well-instructed servant-girl. The religious teaching is conducted by Mr. Heldring in person. Though children of all denominations, even Romanists and Jewesses, are admitted, yet the Bible stands like a shining candle in the midst of the household. The Institution is thoroughly Protestant and Evangelical, but no child is refused on account of its denominational extraction. Should Roman Catholic priests or Jewish rabbis claim them back in a legal way, they are given up; but, as long as they are left, they must read the Bible and hear of Christ.

It is found that theft is the most predominating sin of these poor creatures. With some it is so inveterate that it seems inborn. "Ah, sir," said a girl one day in a tone of despondency, "isn't it a calamity to have been trained so as to be unable to forbear thieving!" It was obvious that the poor thing was struggling with an all but irresistible bad inclination, which, like a second nature, clung to her flesh.

Notwithstanding these and similar difficulties, Mr. Heldring may rejoice at a surprising success. At the close of 1863, the house lodged 122 girls, while 146 had left it since its foundation. Of these 32 had either died or quitted the Institution shortly after their reception. Out of the remaining 114, 93 give the Direction every reason for content and gratitude to God. Some are assistant-

teachers at the Institution; some have become teachers of infant schools; some are married; the rest are servants, of whom many have already continued four years in one service.

When these statistics are compared with those of Steenbeek, the result turns out most favourable for Talitha. At Steenbeek one is lost out of three; at Talitha only one out of seven or eight. This proves the excellence of the preventive system above the repressive. It is next to certain that more than two-thirds of the unhappy females at Steenbeek would never have sunk into the depth of prostitution had they as children been sent to Talitha.



IX

The Foundation of Bethel—Statistics

WHEN the two Asylums came to be in full operation, it was soon felt that a third was required. Talitha was a house for children. Not to limit themselves to too narrow a choice, the Direction had fixed the sixteenth year as the extreme age. It was found, however, that it was impossible to stick to this limitation. Among the girls who were sent up in a continuous stream to Talitha, there were many from 16 to 20 and 21. They were not yet prostitutes, but about to fall into the pit of prostitution. Most of them were released convicts. Cast out from society at such a tender age, deprived of all self-esteem in consequence of their public infamy, children of parents

mostly ten times worse than themselves, and destitute of friends better than themselves, these unhappy creatures saw no other refuge save the brothel or the night-house. It was impossible for the Direction to refuse them, when sent up by a compassionate Christian friend or a philanthropic society; but it was almost as impossible to find a fit place for them among the children of Talitha. Still, in one way or other, places were *made* for them. But it was soon found that matters could not go on in that way. Their number increased with every month. About the close of 1860 it had amounted to 24.

It was about this time that the Irish prison system attracted the attention of the philanthropists and political economists of Holland. The late Mr. van der Brugghen, who was once Minister of Justice, a man of great information and decided Christian principles, published a pamphlet about the Irish system, which greatly interested his friend, Mr. Heldring. What especially drew the sympathy of Mr. Heldring was Captain Crofton's scheme of intermediate prisons. It gained his heart, because it was based upon the principle of the restoration of self-esteem and self-control in the minds of the released convicts. Such an institution was exactly the thing he wanted for his girls above sixteen They required a training and treatment quite different from that of the Talitha children, and different, too, from that of the Steenbeek prostitutes. They were too much advanced in sin to be fit to mix with the former, and not advanced enough to mix safely with the latter. They were at the point of transition from the last stage of innocence to the first of shameless profligacy. If at this momentous period of life

Christian love took them kindly by the hand, their bodies might in time be saved from social ruin, and their souls from everlasting perdition. Mr. Heldring resolved not to leave one stone unturned till a third asylum was founded, which should bear the name of Bethel.

When I visited Mr. Heldring in January, 1863, Bethel was still in process of building. From what I was able to see, however, and from what I learnt through Mr. Heldring, I may conclude that the organisation of the household is carried on on the same footing as at Talitha. But infinitely greater difficulties are to be encountered here, and greater disappointments try the courage and patience of Christian love. Mr. Heldring divides the denizens of Bethel into two classes: 1, those who are over-fed with religious cant; and 2, the thoroughly ignorant. The former class forms only one-tenth of the whole band, but they are not the easiest of the two to deal with. They were from their childhood trained, if training it was, in orthodox families; they know the contents of the Bible; they know their catechism; they can sing psalms and recite prayers; they are perfectly versed in the phraseology of the pious; they know how to speak of the Lord, His grace and covenanted faithfulness, at a moment's notice. On account of these accomplishments they were the pride of their foolish parents, and considered as converted by their equally foolish acquaintances. But it soon became evident that they were only parrots, and as void of true religion as a stagnant pool is of living fish. They fell into the hands of the police. The prison became their abode, and, but for Bethel stepping in in time, the brothel would have become their residence, and the

hospital their last refuge. To make these wretched creatures unlearn their wicked piety, and to make them real sinners in their own sight, as they are in the sight of God, is a task which goes far beyond human wisdom and power. "Among this class," Mr. Heldring says, "there are many hopeless."

Still, the work of Bethel, though in its commencement, promises an encouraging success under the blessing of God. At the close of 1863 the number of girls taken into the Institution amounted to 86. Of these, 45 were in the house still. Out of the remaining 41, 14 were placed in good situations, 10 returned to their parents, 1 died, 1 went to the Cape, 4 ran away, 3 returned to a life of sin, 3 were transferred to Steenbeek, 2 boarded out, and 3 uncertain. So Bethel seems to keep the middle between Talitha and Steenbeek. Of the Talitha girls, 1 proves lost out of 7; of the Bethel ones, 1 out of 5; of the Steenbeek ones, 1 out of 3.

The three asylums are placed under the direction of three separate committees. They form three distinct corporations, recognised by the State, and, though all of them are superintended by Mr. Heldring, they are kept strictly separate from each other as to their financial and domestic administration. They are all free of debt, with the exception of the above-mentioned £250, which is wanting to pay the rest of the expenses of Bethel. They are supported partly from the sums which come in for boarding, partly from voluntary contributions.

Mr. Heldring's history shows what great things one good man may achieve, if he commences with small things, and looking up to his God, is constrained by the

love of Christ, and guided by the spirit of wisdom. Some sixteen years ago Mr. Heldring took a few wretched girls under his care, and at present three houses of refuge are there, offering shelter, support, and redemption, to upwards of 200 lost and neglected young females, and realising a value of between £5000 to £6000, with an annual income of £3500.

Much more could be said of Mr. Heldring's operations on the field of Christian philanthropy and evangelical Missions—of that wonderful place, called *Anna Polowna Polder*, which is the result of the energy of private enterprise without the assistance of the Government, and which is now the happy abode of a population of 1400 souls, most of whom, but for this opportunity unexpectedly presented to them of finding their livelihood by the labour of their own hands, would have emigrated to America in order to escape starvation, and also of his activity in the cause of Dutch Missions in the East.

Here I take leave of Mr. Heldring and his excellent work, with the cordial wish that he may be yet spared many years, as a blessing to Holland, and as a living witness of the truth of that saying of Scripture, that "the Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation."

AGRICULTURAL COLONY AT RIJSSELT, NEAR ZUTPHEN

(CALLED NETHERLAND METTRAY).

I

Origin and Foundation of the Colony

THE pretty country-town of Zutphen, situated on the border of the river IJssel in one of the most fertile and charming districts of Guelderland, is well known to those who are acquainted with the exploits of the English warriors in the Netherlands in the days of Leicester. Perhaps many an Englishman in our day has, in his tour to Germany, taken a trip to the place where Sir Philip Sidney lost his life in the defence of religion and liberty against the persecutions of Rome and the oppression of the Spanish tyrant, and where also Edward Stanley took a bastion at the moment when all seemed to be lost. Had I been the guide of those visitors, I should have advised them not to leave this old fortress without paying a visit to the neighbouring estate of Rijsselt. Passing through the Nieuwstads gate we would cross a long wooden bridge, with red-painted balustrade, leading to a cluster of earthen bulwarks and sconces, through

which an indifferently-paved street winds up to the beautiful turnpike road leading to the town of Deventer. The pretty avenue of high poplars which line this road on both sides and the lovely landscape round about would fully reward the trouble of a couple of miles' walk. Soon we should reach the last Penny Inn, where in old times the country people, when driving their fat cows and oxen to the celebrated cattle market of Zutphen, used to take their last glass of beer after having left the town. A finger-post opposite the inn, with the inscription "Netherland Mettray," directs the traveller into a sandy country road, which in summer invites to a nice little walk through verdant meadows towards Rijsselt, formerly a nobleman's estate, now an agricultural colony for indigent boys. Here I should invite my companions to stop a day, in order to witness victories, less bloody than those gained on the field of battle, but certainly not less admirable, honourable, and beneficial.

The origin of this philanthropic establishment was like the lighting of an unlit candle by means of a lit one. The lit candle was the French agricultural colony of Mettray near Tours. Its rays spread so far as to attract the attention of W. H. Suringar, Esq., Amsterdam. This gentleman, who combines with an independent position in society a heart full of sympathy with the poor and neglected class, had devoted a considerable portion of his life to the study of pauperism in Holland, and by means of interesting and useful addresses, both printed and oral, tried to stem its terribly-increasing flood. Such a man could not hear of the French Mettray without resolving to go and see it. In 1845, at the age of fifty-five, he

visited that colony, and was so struck with what he witnessed that he resolved not to leave one stone unturned till a similar establishment blessed the indigent youth of his own country. He repeated that visit in 1847; and thus having acquainted himself with all the details and particulars of such an institution, he gave an account of it at a meeting at Amsterdam.

This discourse drew forth great applause; but Mr. Suringar was aware that speeches, though ever so eloquently delivered and advocating the most urgent cause, often produce no other effect than the transient cheers with which they are received. He requested a friend to write a book upon the French Mettray, for which he furnished him with all the required particulars. Mr. Suringar's speech was added to it. The book was published, and proved to be admirably written: but it was bought only by a few, and threatened to pass into oblivion like the applause of the meeting. As in many places of Holland the church-deacons, when canvassing from house to house collecting the money-offerings, send a little boy ahead, who rings the bells and cries, "They are coming with the box!" so Mr. Suringar felt he must send out a forerunner to introduce the book. A little leaf or tract was got up and spread to the following effect:—

"I humbly request each of my fellow-countrymen to favour me with a gift of two florins (3s. 4d.) or thereabouts. I only ask it for once. For this sum each will receive an excellent book, from which much may be learnt. It treats of an establishment in France for children who have neglected themselves or are neglected by others. The establishment is founded at Mettray, and



WILLEM HENDRICK SURINGAR

the book is written by the able Dr. van Baumhauer, of Utrecht. I have visited that establishment and examined it minutely. It meets with the approval of the experts of all the countries of Europe. I wish such an institution to be founded in the Netherlands. But this is a work of years. To promote that foundation the above-mentioned book ought to be largely spread and largely read. Whosoever signs his name to this paper [subscribes for the book] does a good work. W. H. S."

This little messenger was by Providence carried to its right place. It fell into the hands of a wealthy landed proprietor at Amsterdam of the name of C. D. Schuller, Esq. He signed the little leaf, and the book was sent to him accordingly. Not half an hour elapsed after its perusal before he wrote a note to Mr. Suringar, in which he offered him a present of a portion of his grounds near Arnheim to the extent of about 250 acres, together with the farmhouse, the barn, the stable, etc. This letter was dated the 11th October, 1847. Two months later another letter of Mr. Schuller's came, saying that if his grounds should prove unfit for the purpose, he would be willing to sell them and give the profit to the Institution.

It is not every day the post brings such letters. Those were happy days for Mr. Suringar, who now saw that, if spared, he was likely to witness the realisation of his heart's desire. From intercourse with Mr. Schuller, he learnt that this gentleman desired that the Institution should be exclusively for Protestant boys, and not only, like the French Mettray, for young convicts, but for indigent, neglected boys in general. Neither of these

conditions was an obstacle. Mr. Suringar himself, though not belonging to the orthodox party of Holland, yet was a stanch Protestant, and too great an admirer of the power of religion in the matter of education not to perceive that a mixed institution of Roman Catholic and Protestant children would put all religious training out of the question. His sympathy with the poor class was also wide enough to embrace all the indigent and neglected children, whether or not they had been sentenced by an earthly judge.

But he did not yet accept the generous offer. With him, as with many kind-hearted Dutch people, prudence was the companion of charity, and he took time to count the cost of the building. It was obvious that the gift, generous as it was, was not sufficient to completely carry out the plan. It was not merely his intention to *found* a Mettray, but to keep it in *existence*. For this large sums would be required, and Mr. Suringar deemed it wise not to lay the foundation stone until the roof was guaranteed. The year 1848 came on with its revolution and financial crisis, and Mr. Suringar was glad at having been led to apply the *festina lente*. During that year the treaty with Mr. Schuller was dropped for the time being, but a large correspondence was carried on with people of influence and notoriety in the sphere of philanthropy. The spring of 1849 came on, and its vernal sun dispelled the clouds of 1848. Mr. Schuller now with kind urgency insisted upon a definite answer. Circulars for subscriptions and donations were spread to obtain a sum of from 20,000 to 25,000 florins (£2080), in addition to Mr. Schuller's gift. This request met with the desired response. A provi-

sional committee was created under the presidency of Count Schimmelpenninck van der Oije. The grounds of Mr. Schuller being found not to answer the purpose, were sold. In September 1850, this gentleman committed the profit of the sale, amounting to 16,000 florins (£1333), to the hands of Count Schimmelpenninck; and at the same time the estate of Rijsselt, with its premises and about 130 acres of arable land, woods, copses, and meadows, was bought for 32,400 florins (£2700). A journey was made to the Hague to petition for exemption from the payment of the deed of conveyance, but in vain. The Government seemed to be of opinion that the usefulness of the new establishment to the country should first of all be experienced by the exchequer.

But the Government is one body, and the royal family is another. The King, William III., favoured the Institution with a donation of 500 florins. It being the plan of the Committee to found small houses, in each of which fourteen boys should live as a family, under the superintendence of a well-principled man, his Majesty also presented the Institution with 3000 florins for the building of two houses, which should bear the names of his late father, William II., and of his deceased son, Prince Maurice. Her Majesty the Queen Dowager gave 1500 florins for a house called after her late grandson Alexander; and his Royal Highness Prince Frederic, uncle of the King, gave the same sum for the foundation of a house called after his much-lamented son, the late Prince Frederic.

Thus royal liberality made up for the narrowness of ministerial calculations. Nor did the people keep aloof.

Four hundred and sixty contributors gave donations of from 50 to 500 florins (£4, 3s. 4d. to £41, 13s. 4d.). Twelve hundred subscribed five florins annually (8s. 4d.). Two hundred operatives and poor people promised a farthing a day. Everything now encouraged Mr. Suringar in his beneficial undertaking. The temporary Committee was changed into a regular Board of five commissaries, of which he became president. Then the building of the required houses was proceeded with. The principal dwelling-house of the estate was altered for its present purpose. A new, spacious school-house, and the four above-mentioned royal family-houses, were built. The foundation-stone was laid on the 21st of June, 1851, and on the 18th of December of the same year the first family, consisting of eleven boys, under the superintendence of an able "house-father," entered one of the family-houses. All the commissaries were present at the spot to give them a cordial reception. The next Sunday Divine service was held in one of the houses, to give praise to God for His faithful assistance, and to entreat His further blessing upon the work.

Now, for a work like this premises are indispensable, and so is money; but neither the one nor the other will lead to anything satisfactory if the man who is to stand at the head of the day's business is not a good teacher as well as a good administrator. Such a man was found in Mr. Schlimmer, one of the first school-teachers in Rotterdam. From his fifteenth to his fortieth year he had been engaged at the prison for juvenile convicts, where he had not only obtained a profound knowledge of the character, the wants, and the habits of neglected boys, but also of

the best means to awaken the slumbering feelings of honesty, justice, and generosity in their minds, and to raise them to such a height of self-control as would enable many of them to return to an orderly life in society. In this work he had, during the last six or seven years, been assisted by a young usher of the name of Vermeire, who had displayed great talent and a warm heart for teaching these unhappy children. Both men would often look with compassion at the hundreds of boys who would, most likely, never have come to this place of shame and punishment had they been favoured with the boon of an orderly family training. They were now cut off from disorder by the sword of the police, and compelled to orderliness within the thick walls and the iron gates of the prison: but the two friends knew too well what dreadful obstacles to true education were those very walls and iron gates. Training children in a prison is like nursing flowers in a cellar. No wonder that Mr. Schlimmer and his friend were delighted to accept the call,—the former as a director and the latter as a sub-director of the Netherland Mettray. The foundation of such a colony was exactly the thing they had always wished for the poor boys of Holland. They joyfully entered the Establishment in 1852, and they are still engaged in the excellent work to which they have devoted themselves.

The Board of Commissaries, to which the entire financial administration of the colony was confided, appointed a chief committee of nineteen members, to which every year an account should be given of the state of the Institution. The president of this committee was the Baron Schimmelpenninck van der Oije van de Poll, Arnheim,

and the rest of its members consisted of individuals who either belonged to the nobility or to the aristocratic class of society.

Thus Mr. Suringar enjoyed the pleasure of seeing fulfilled the prediction which he had pronounced at the meeting at Amsterdam in 1847: "If some kind-hearted people go hand in hand, we shall be sure to have a well-organised Mettray three or four years hence."

II.

Object and Organisation of the Colony.

As early as the year 1850 the Direction of the Netherland Mettray composed the rules and regulations according to which the Society was to be governed. This document, which contains fifty-one articles, was translated into the English, French, and German languages, and largely circulated. One only needs to glance at it to observe the experience and organising skill which characterised its author. It met with so much approval and admiration from philanthropists abroad, that five of them not only favoured the Society with donations of 50 florins and upwards (among whom was Counsellor Demetz, founder of the French Mettray), but in Bavaria a similar colony was founded upon the basis of this admirable little book.

To find the money requisite for the support and

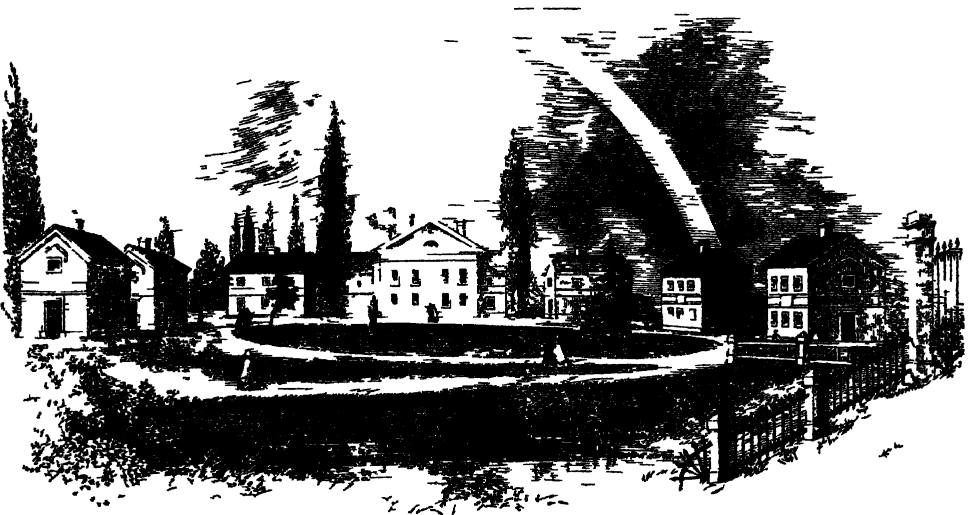
further extension of the Institution, voluntary contributions are collected. The contributors are divided into three classes—viz., *Founders*, who pay donations of from 50 florins (£4, 3s. 4d.) and upwards; *Members*, who pay an annual subscription of at least 5 florins; *Well-wishers*, who pay a contribution of a farthing a day.

The direction of the Institution is chiefly intrusted to the Commissaries, of whom at present there are five. Their number, however, may be increased to seven. This Board of Commissaries is the fly-wheel in the machine; for the Chief Committee, of which I have spoken already, is but a committee of supervision, and meets only once a year in one of the great towns of the country. The Commissaries, on the contrary, meet once every month. They are chosen out of the founders and members, and expected to do their work gratuitously; and this work is no trifle. They are charged with the government of the Society and of the Colony; they have the correspondence with the Directors of the auxiliary societies, called Departments; they conduct and control the whole financial administration, decide upon the admission and release of pupils, appoint the functionaries of the Society, and fix their salaries. Plenty to do, indeed, for five gentlemen who have their own private business to look after besides.

If the Board of Commissaries may be rightly called the fly-wheel in the machine, the Director may be called the great beam or lever. He "is placed at the head of the Colony, and administers according to the precepts given by the Commissaries." He lives in the Colony, and is not allowed to leave it without their permission.

This, of course, must be the rule; but since Mr. Schlimmer and his sub-director have proved perfectly trustworthy men, the latter clause has become very elastic. On my visit to the Colony in November, 1863, I learnt that a visit of the Commissaries had gradually become a rare thing. This confirms the observation so often made, that, however numerous and excellent committees and their regulations may be, the whole concern, after all, depends upon one man. If he is what he ought to be, the committees may look on at their ease and rejoice. If he is not, committees can do nothing until they succeed in appointing the right man to the place. Committees may be useful and even indispensable in philanthropic pursuits, but they are such as the *tribuni plebis* were in the Senate of Rome,—by dint of their *veto* they may prevent many bad things from being done, but for doing many good things they are unfit, unless one man does it for them.

Mr. Schlimmer and his under director, who is especially charged with surveying the cultivation of the fields and with a part of the school instruction, are loved by the boys; and the way in which the latter, who guided me through the Colony, conversed with some of them evinced a kind, cordial understanding between the teacher and his pupils. What struck me at once, upon entering the place and taking a view of the whole, was the appearance of perfect order, neatness, and cleanliness that characterised the grounds, the buildings, and their inhabitants. Having passed through the iron gate which forms the chief entrance to the Colony, I found myself in a spacious square, or rather, in a large garden, the centre of which



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was occupied by a comprehensive flower-pot, behind which again, at a considerable distance, the principal building lifted up its elegant two-storied front. One part of this building is the dwelling-house of the Director; the other contains the offices, committee-rooms, the library, etc. To the right and left I saw a number of small houses, whose white-plastered clean-looking walls beautifully contrasted with the verdure of the grass and the yellow hue of the sandy soil. These were the dwelling-houses of the functionaries and the boys' family-houses, of which at present there are nine. At a small distance from the gate, to the right, a new and elegantly built model farmhouse attracted my attention. On the opposite side it was suitably faced by a fine chapel, which was all but finished. I was quite surprised at its splendid style and structure, which—especially as I found that the building was only destined for a religious meeting-house and not for a church—appeared to me not to stand in harmony with the simplicity of the other buildings, nor with the idea of a colony for indigent children. I learnt, however, that this edifice was built from a special fund, given by a few kind-hearted friends for the purpose, so that not a farthing of the Colony fund had been spent upon it. A considerable portion of the building was also reared by the boys themselves, many of whom are being trained as carpenters and masons. The interior of the boys' family-houses is simple, commodious, and extremely clean. Such a house consists of a spacious dwelling-room, a smaller washing-room, and a little closet for the family-father on the ground-floor, and a dormitory upstairs. The meals are prepared in the general kitchen,

from which they are taken to the family-houses, as each family breakfasts, dines, and sups by itself. The kitchen, the washing-house, the school-house, and the workshops are behind the principal building. There is also the nursery, with its hotbeds and flower-house, where those boys are taught who are trained as gardeners. A ditch, which is all that remains of a moat that formerly wound round the estate, separates the nursery from the extensive kitchen-garden. Here everything belonging to the art of growing vegetables is to be found. It terminates in a small cemetery, where, with the permission of the Government, the Colony buries its own dead.

As to the outward appearance of the boys, I could scarcely realise to myself the fact that I was in the midst of 150 indigent, neglected children, most of whom had even very recently disgraced the streets of our towns by their filthy look, vulgar habits, and impudent behaviour. With the exception of a few vulgar and knavish-looking countenances, the whole company appeared to me an assembly of cheerful, intelligent, respectable lads. Their manly attitude and orderly movements proved the constant care bestowed upon their bodily training. And little wonder: they are trained entirely in a military way: a special drillmaster being appointed for the purpose.

The boys wear no uniform, strictly speaking; but as their simple dresses are generally made of the same stuff and after the same cut, they are very much alike. On their caps the inscription *Nederlandsch Mettray* is seen. During the week days they wear a dress of coarse woollen stuff: on Sunday they appear in a better habit. The

house-father, who is at the head of a family, is assisted by one of the boys, called "Elder Brother." This is not a title of age, but of rank. The boy who is promoted to that distinction has marked himself out by his good conduct and kind character. Indeed he is virtually chosen by the members of the family themselves, and appointed by the Direction accordingly. Thus a little bit of constitutional polity is introduced into the families. The boys feel that they are considered as rational beings, who have their own rights in their own sphere. The influence of these "Elder Brothers" upon their fellow-pupils very soon proved wonderful indeed. They greatly facilitate the work of the Father by putting an offender right, by settling questions and quarrels, etc. It is a point of honour with the family to uphold the authority of its Elder Brother. When the Director and the Commissaries observed the moral power which those boys exercised upon their comrades, it occurred to them that they might be turned to still greater usefulness. It was found that there often was some difficulty in finding fit individuals for the situation of Family-fathers; so the experiment was tried whether some of the Elder Brothers might not be trained for that employment. There were three out of six who distinguished themselves by extraordinarily good conduct: they were promoted to a higher rank, with the title of *Monitors.* As a badge of their authority, a yellow stripe was fixed upon their left arm, while the Elder Brothers wore two stripes. A small apartment was provided for them where they lived as free boys. They were exempt from the daily control, were permitted to worship on Sunday at any of the neighbouring churches, and to walk

alone wherever they pleased. The object of this kind of emancipation was gradually to prepare them for their future free life in society, and thus, by a smooth transition from their state of minority to that of majority, to accustom them to self-control. It was a touching sight to witness those three boys when, on the day of their promotion as Monitors, they left the houses in which they had lived as Elder Brothers, and entered the little house which henceforth was to be their dwelling. There they stood in the little parlour, quite alone, and not knowing that any one looked through a window to witness their conduct. It was evening and time for prayer, but there was no father now to offer it up. They stood a short while unsettled, looking at one another with an air of confusion. But soon the eldest of the three folds his hands, and the two others kneel down. A short but fervent prayer was offered up, and, having risen from their knees, the three friends shook hands with visible emotion.

Thus they showed that the good was not merely a form with them, but a principle. The Commissaries felt greatly encouraged to intrust to them the leading of a family if a Father should be ill or away from home. These experiments were crowned by the utmost success. Then it so happened that two or three Fathers at a time were called to situations in orphan-houses. Our Monitors took their places and fulfilled their task so well, that no necessity was felt to look out for successors to the departed Fathers. New family-houses were built through the liberality of generous donors, and new Monitors were chosen out of the band of Elder Brothers. Thus gradually the Moni-

tor system took the place of the Father system. I saw some of those Monitors, and was greatly pleased with their appearance. I expected they would be insupportably pedantic, and assume airs. Nothing of the kind. They were the most kind-hearted and simple-minded boys I ever saw. They are fine boys, indeed, and one only needs to look into their open, pleasant faces, to understand how they exercise such a remarkable power upon their fellow-pupils.

I hope, however, that it is not the intention of the Commissaries to discard the Father system altogether. There are things occurring in a family of boys which require the care and control of an adult man. There are not a few which require the tender touch of a female hand. And here, it appears to me, is the weak point of the Mettray training system. The organisation of the pupils into separate small families is certainly a considerable improvement upon the Asylum and Colony life. Everything that tends to remove the idea of a wholesale education and approaches that of a home and family life must have a beneficial effect, because bearing the stamp of nature. But a family without a mother is like a parlour without a fire in winter. The education of boys, however orderly and well disciplined, must in many respects be one-sided, verging upon the Spartan system, and more apt to form clever citizens and soldiers than good husbands and masters of families. It must be borne in mind, however, that a considerable outlay would be required to fill up that blank. Nor would it be an easy task to find fit married couples, who, not being burdened with a family of their own, would be delighted to extend

their parental care over a family of strangers. Indeed we ought not to find fault with the Society for not yet having reached that ideal of perfection. We ought much rather to rejoice at the considerable steps already taken towards its realisation, and to witness 150 boys divided into nine families, in which they enjoy a happy life and a moral education, which they never would have found in their own homes.

III.

A Glance at the Colony Life.

THE life in the Colony is based upon the principle of free mutual agreement. The boys are not under the impression that they are here for their punishment, but for their welfare. United in families of fourteen members, they spend their day in useful and agreeable engagements, relieved now and then by a walk or a game. Their day begins at five. After having washed and dressed they make their beds; then each of them takes his place before his iron bedstead, and the Family-father or the Monitor holds an inspection. They kneel down, and the Father or Monitor offers up prayer. They find their breakfast downstairs in the family-room: it consists of bread-and-butter and cold water. The whole company sits down and a chapter is read; then they rise and a blessing is asked. The nourishment is taken under cheerful talk, and again they rise to return thanks. Each

one now goes to the place where he is wanted—one to the school, another to the workshop or to the field. At dinner and supper time they meet again in lively youthful merriment. After they return from labour, if the weather is fine, they sit down on the bench outside the house, read to one another, tell stories, give out riddles, or go into their own little garden behind the house, in which they may dig and plant just as they please. If the weather is unfavourable they assemble in the family parlour, and the Father or Monitor tells them a story or reads one from a book. There is also a play-ground behind every house, where they are taught to enjoy their sports without quarrelling and screaming.

A means of education on which much stress is laid is the "Sentence system," which was introduced after the example of two important institutions in France. It has been observed by friends of education that a short sentence, a pithy proverb, or even a single word which contained an important meaning, would often produce a beneficial effect upon the juvenile mind. It may at its first impression at once give a decided turn to a child's character; or it may seem to be left unnoticed for a considerable length of time and to have no bearing at all; and yet, after years, that same little word may come forth from the storehouse of memory, and, in the hand of an invisible Friend, become the leading-string by which the erring soul is led back into the good way. Besides, there are a thousand circumstances in daily life in which a good proverb, recollected in time, may prove an excellent counsellor and a safe guide. The Commissaries accordingly have provided each building, from the chapel

down to the kitchen, and likewise each dormitory, with a sentence or a text from Scripture.

Whenever anything extraordinary takes place in a family, or when a boy makes himself notorious by his bad behaviour, a sentence is applied. Thus on the occasion of the death of one of the parents of a boy, a consoling text or sentence is suspended on the wall of his dormitory. One day a boy was discovered speaking filthy talk to one of his comrades. The sentence, "It is better to be dumb than to use the tongue for filthy talk," was given to him, which he had to read to the company every morning during eight days. It was productive of the desired effect.

Besides the lists of sentences, Bibles are also given to the boys. In this respect the British and Foreign Bible Society has, as usual, shown its liberal spirit. In 1854 it presented the Colony with fifty Bibles, and in 1860 with other twenty.

A boy's first birthday in the Colony is usually taken advantage of to make him a present of a little pocket-book. On its first page he finds three or four questions or sentences, which are specially adapted to his character. They are written down for his self-examination. One would expect that the boy would either leave the questions alone, or take out the leaf. Experience has taught the contrary in many instances.

The Direction on the whole is averse to hard punishments. The Dutch proverb is borne in mind that more flies are caught with treacle than with vinegar. It is found that most of the faults of the boys are owing to cruel treatment and injudicious punishment at home.

One boy was so accustomed to be "licked," that he never could be addressed without suddenly throwing his head down between his elbows. It took some time to make him unlearn that habit.

At the Colony every kind of bodily punishment, even imprisonment, is prohibited. Everything is tried in the way of persuasion. Only in special cases is some mechanical measure resorted to. Sometimes a boy who has proved refractory is severed from the family conversation and put at a separate little table in the dwelling-room; sometimes a homœopathic method is adopted. In the last-mentioned way two boys, who preferred playing to working, were cured. They had continued playing with marbles during the morning instead of going to their labour. They had been warned, but in vain. In the afternoon they came up to join the band of labouring boys: they were refused. A dozen marbles were given to them, and they were ordered to play during the afternoon. They entreated to be permitted to work. They never again stayed away from their work. Sometimes a symbolical method is applied, which appeals to the conscience through the medium of expressive signs. Two boys were slightly indisposed, and were lying at the infirmary. Now it is a rule that nobody, except under special permission, is allowed to provide the invalids with food or drink; but early in the morning some one brought them a cup of tea from the kitchen. They took it, but it was reported to the Director. Now these boys were fond of drawing from nature, in which they received regular instruction. A cup and a saucer were brought up to the sick-room, and they were requested to copy these

objects. When finished they handed their copies to the Director. "Sir," they said, their eyes bent down to the floor, "we understand you; it shall never happen again." Sometimes public opinion proves a satisfactory remedy. Three boys one day stole away to a neighbouring farm, plucked some cherries, and broke a branch off the tree. No sooner was this crime reported than some of the boys said to the three, "This is such a great offence, that eight days will be required to make up our minds what is to be done in the matter." Other boys said, "You are going to bring Mettray into disrepute, as if the boys of Mettray were dishonest fellows." They thereupon were left alone. They were excluded from conversation. Nobody wanted to talk with them; nobody shook hands with them; nobody said, "good morning" or "good evening" to them. This proved unbearable. Before the eight days had elapsed they went up to the Director: "Sir, we have been wrong; we have committed a great evil. Pardon us. One of us has a little money; we will go to the farmer and pay the damage."

Thus the Colony represents a happy commonwealth on a small scale. Its juvenile population enjoys the benefits of free private life, controlled by a well-directed public spirit and regulated by judicious laws. To keep up due respect for the whole body, feelings of mutual esteem and cordial affection are as much as possible promoted among the members.

This spirit of fellowship, gratifying as it is, yet might easily turn into a spirit of clannishness, were there not many elements in the Colony that have a tendency towards universalism. First, the separation into families

is entirely removed during school and work time. Then everything that may lead towards a spirit of rivalry and contention between the families is carefully avoided, and even prohibited. In their sports such a thing as a sham fight between two families, etc., is forbidden. The members of all the families are during the day treated as members of one family, of which the Director is the father. Still a slight shade of onesidedness may, perhaps, be observed in the body, as compared with society at large. A Mettray boy, it is said, is always somehow or other recognisable from certain peculiarities either of thought, language, or habits. I do not wonder at this. I do not believe that any good and solid colony training is possible without being productive of something of the kind. If it is not, the education must have been carried on in confusion, because conducted without a certain fixed plan. We observe the same sort of thing in the members of every family whose heads are persons of character, training their children not at random, but modelling them after a certain ideal which is constantly kept in view. The character of the parents and the method of training cannot but stamp the children more or less with peculiar marks. The danger of onesidedness is, however, best prevented through the medium of public school teaching.

It is calculated that about six thousand people visit the Colony every year. Here an opportunity of conversation is granted on an unlimited scale. The boys are also sent to the market at Zutphen to sell the productions of the Colony. There they have an opportunity of mixing with the country people of all the neighbouring districts.

These measures have had the desired effect. The Mettray boys may have some slight peculiarities that remind one of the Colony, but they are anything but hotbed plants. They prove quite up to the mark when entering social life, and any shade of clannishness that may adhere to them upon leaving the Colony is soon dispelled after one or two years' contact with the people at large.

Sunday at Mettray is kept as a day of public devotion, rest, and recreation. The forenoon is spent in the parish church. From 1 to 2, singing-class; from 2 to 4, a walk under the leading of the respective family heads; from 4 to 5 psalms and hymns are committed to memory; from 5 to 6, the Catechist of the parish holds a Scripture-reading class at the Meeting-house; from 6 till supper the boys are at liberty to play, to read, and to amuse themselves at their pleasure.

IV.

Fruits and Present State of the Colony.

TWELVE years have elapsed since the foundation of the Colony: a sufficiently long period to enable us to learn something of the results of the system.

According to the object which the first founders of the Colony had in view, it was to be an exclusively agricultural one. Poor, neglected boys, chiefly taken from

the large towns, were to be trained for the farming and gardening life. Handicraft was not forbidden, as it was supposed that some of the town boys would prove unfit for agricultural labour: but it was to be considered as an exception to the rule. The chief object was to thin the pauper population of the towns, and to increase the number of happy country people.

This plan, after an experience of a dozen years, has proved good, though not to such an extent as its first originators expected. Of the 100 boys who, since the foundation of the Colony to the close of 1860, had left the place, and among whom only 16 were country boys, 35 became agriculturists, and 23 gardeners. So 42, *i.e.*, nearly 50 per cent., have missed the chief object so far as regards their social position. The cause of this result is quite obvious. Some town boys not only proved unfit for agricultural labour, but many showed an unconquerable aversion to it. Everything was tried to change their minds, but in vain. No other choice was left but either to send them back to their parents, or to open up an additional channel. The latter course was adopted. A joiner's shop was established. This was crowned with the utmost success. Some of the Mettray pupils at present earn their bread as able carpenters. Next a bakery was started, then a tailor's shop and a shoemaker's, and finally, a smithy. Some of the boys also displayed a talent for teaching. A normal school for training school-teachers was started on a small scale. It commenced with six boys. They of course required a higher instruction than the rest. Teachers were engaged for various branches, such as French, German, English,

Mathematics, Algebra, etc. It was a somewhat hazardous experiment, but it turned out most successful. Some of those pupils have creditably passed their examination, and are at present ushers in National Schools. In 1858 one of them was engaged by the Government as a teacher in the East Indies, at a salary of 900 florins (£75). One of the boys even showed such a talent for drawing, that in 1861, at a public competition, he gained the highest premium—a silver prize-medal. He is at present assistant to a lithographer at Amsterdam, who pays him a fair salary.

Such results are sufficient to justify this deviation from the original plan. It stands to reason, however, that these institutions must increase the expenditure of the Colony to a considerable extent. If all the boys devoted themselves exclusively to field and garden work, the Colony, which is free from debt, would perhaps be able to support itself from the revenue of its grounds, and from the sums paid for board.

It appears from the state of expenditure that, during the year 1862, each boy cost the Colony about 180 florins (£15). This is a large sum if compared with the cost of a child at other institutions. As matters are at present, the Colony is not able to meet its expenses, except through the medium of considerable voluntary contributions, of about £1192 a year, and the interest of a capital of 29,622·65 florins (£2469), which is chiefly derived from bequests and donations. The total expenditure at the close of 1862 amounted to 27,293 florins (£2274); the total income to 28,755 florins (£2396), so that a balance was left of 1462

florins (£122), which was added to the foundation fund.

The Netherland Mettray may be quoted as one of the fairest proofs of the liberality of the Dutch philanthropists, and of the admirable administrative skill of the Dutch financiers. If any plan is deemed good and useful no expense is dreaded; but the principle is persistently adhered to that the money must be there, before the expense may be incurred. Debt is absolutely forbidden. The balance is always kept in such a state that, if need be, the Colony would be able to continue for a year without receiving one farthing from gifts or contributions. For new schemes new funds are created by special collections.

To promote the public interest in the Colony, and to further the collecting of the contributions, the Society has founded Departments or Auxiliary Societies at various places in the kingdom. In every commonalty where there are ten or more founders or members such a department is established. Its Direction is consulted about the admission of pupils from their residence or from a neighbouring place, and it is qualified to recommend to the Commissaries boys living in that quarter. To prove the sympathy which the Colony enjoys throughout the country it may be mentioned that, on the 1st of January 1863, it numbered 38 departments; 626 co-founders (who have favoured the Colony with donations of 50 florins (£4, 3s. 4d.), or more); 2178 members (who pay annual subscriptions of 5 florins (8s. 4d.), and 162 well-wishers (who pay a farthing a day). This is a very large number of contributors, considering that Holland teems

with charitable institutions, large and small, and that out of its population of three millions, two-fifths are Roman Catholic.

It is gratifying to observe the conscientious care with which pupils who have finished their education are dismissed. The day of their departure is a day of grave solemnity. It is commenced with divine service. The Director addresses the young men from a text of Scripture. Then, while they kneel down, he commits them to God's paternal care. Presents are distributed, hands are pressed, and the Commissaries and teachers guide the parting ones to the gate. They go to their respective situations, which have been carefully selected for them, and in most cases a correspondence is kept up with them.

It cannot be wondered at that the results of such a conscientious and careful education surpass expectation. In May 1861, the Commissaries, at their Annual Meeting with the Chief Committee, were able to cheer the latter with the declaration that, among a hundred boys, who since the foundation of the Colony had returned to society, there were only ten who gave them reason of complaint; and of these there were only four whose conduct was decidedly bad. As to the ability of the pupils for their work, nothing was left to be wished. It is generally known that the Mettray boys are sought after by masters of every kind of trade. Applications are too numerous to be entertained. Nor is this to be marvelled at, if we look at the completeness of their education. During the last year of their colony life the boys are, at the expense of the Colony, apprenticed as out-door

servants with the first-rate tradesmen of the neighbouring town of Zutphen. There they are enabled to learn what the colony shops could not teach them. There a Parisian tailor teaches them to make a superb gentleman's suit, and a cabinetmaker to the aristocracy instructs them how to finish off a splendid piece of furniture.

Looking at the Colony in the light of philanthropy, it must be reported as a blessing for Holland, and as one of the most excellent charitable institutions in Europe. But in how far the education of the Mettray boys answers the demands of Christian faith would be difficult to say. Certainly, when a child which appeared to grow up for the prison or the gallows is brought back to an orderly social life, and changed into an honest, active, and kind-hearted man, every Christian will rejoice, and only pharisaical dogmatism will deny that the education which brought about that change is a benefit. Still it has often been remarked and proved that an education is not necessarily a truly Christian one which yields such results. A purely moral training, based upon the principles of natural religion, may be productive of the same result; and Socrates, had he conducted a reformatory, would have been likely to restore many a little vagabond as a respectable member to society. Christian faith desires something more than merely social or even moral reform. It may be thankful to have gained at least so much; but if nothing more is gained, it feels disappointed, because it desires not only to save the child for the present life, but also for the life to come; and it cannot see how the latter could be effected, except through such an educa-

tion as will connect the child's heart by faith and love with the person of Christ as its crucified and risen Saviour from sin and condemnation. Now, I am far from asserting that the Netherlands Mettray Colony ignores this principle altogether. From what I have communicated as to the spirit of the training which prevails at that Institution—the Bible being daily read, and Christ held out to be revered as a Saviour, loved as a friend, and imitated as a pattern—it cannot be said that this higher element is wholly neglected. But these terms or phrases, biblical as they sound, are very elastic, as regards the spirit in which they may be understood. The education at the Colony is professedly religious. The character of the Dutch, as a religiously-minded and church-going nation, is fairly represented; but the doctrinal basis upon which that religious life rests is somewhat uncertain. Doctrinal teaching, if I am right, is on the whole avoided; and if such truths as the orthodox call fundamental are not inculcated, neither are they attacked. It is undoubtedly a good rule in religious training to keep the children aloof from controversial questions, and to make them look upon religion as a matter of the heart, rather than of doctrinal speculation. But that good rule becomes a bad one, if carried to such excess as to make one try to keep the children clear of any doctrinal notions whatever. Where, as is the case at the Colony, the Bible is read, sermons preached, and prayers offered up, the children cannot help making up a certain system of doctrines for themselves, if you do not give it them; and that system of their own will, in most cases, turns out a mixture of vague notions,—a

strange, absurd commixture of truths and errors, which can have no other result but to confuse and to perplex.

Another thing which attracted my notice when at the Colony was the absence of the female element. I already referred to that subject when speaking of the unmarried state of the heads of the various families. But what I now want to point at more especially is the absence of girls. Wichern, who may be considered as the originator of the Mettray system, guarded himself against that evil. The third family which he introduced into his Colony was a family of girls. Undoubtedly the introduction of that element is not unconnected with difficulties. There are dangers from which the boys may be kept aloof by keeping the girls aloof from them; but it is to be feared that those dangers will come back with a greater power of temptation, when the boys, after having left the Colony, will be compelled to mix with the female sex. Mr. Suringar rightly believes that by uniting the boys into small families he approaches nature much more than he would have done if gathering them into one heap, as is the case in orphanages and reformatories. But a colony of nine families of males, without one single woman except a few servants, is certainly as far from nature as anything could be. Nor can I understand what may have induced Mr. Suringar to limit his philanthropic sympathy to the male sex. Such a partiality seems unaccountable in a man who was a happy husband himself, and brought up a daughter, who, as the patron of an excellent infant-school, has called many a child to Christ. I believe that, great as the benefit is which Holland at present derives from the Rijsselt Mettray, that benefit would be more than doubled, if little girls, who now are

growing up for the brothel or the prison, were allowed to share the privileges which at present are only granted to the other sex.

The education of the Dutch Mettray boys is carried to a considerably higher grade than is the case at any other colony or institution of that kind which I have visited. Nor is this to be wondered at where that education costs £15 per head; and no expenditure is grudged in order to teach the boys everything they are capable of learning. But viewing the matter in the light of philanthropy and with reference to poor-reform, it may be asked, whether the training of little vagabonds to a much higher situation in life than they would have obtained if they had been no vagabonds, is as a principle to be recommended? It appears to me that if the pitch of training at the Colony could be a little lowered, so as to reduce a child's cost to say £10 a year, and to admit of the reception of fifty girls, the benefit conferred upon the poor people would be greater, and the proceedings of the Mettray Society more in keeping with the proper object of an agricultural colony for poor neglected children.

The Netherland Mettray, as it is a source of incalculable good to the Dutch people, so it is an admirable monument of the generous philanthropy of a man who, not content with regretting the miserable condition of the poor, and talking about their reform, has put his hand to the work with all his energy and talent, and who has thus become instrumental in turning the liberal beneficent spirit, which always characterised his fellow-countrymen, into profit for the welfare of hundreds of children, who otherwise would have been given up to ignorance and neglect.

THE BLIND SCHOOL AT ILLZACH, NEAR MÜLHAUSEN.

(DEP. DU BAS-RHIN, FRANCE.)



I

Mr Koechlin becomes Blind—He learns to Read and has Thought for Others—Founds an Asylum—Its Success.

THE little rural village of Illzach, situated about two miles from the thriving manufacturing town of Mülhausen or Mulhouse, presents no particular feature of attraction to the stranger. Among its few humble houses, however, there is one of which a French writer on Protestant Charities, Mr. H. de Triquetti, rightly says, that "there are few places which to a higher degree confirm the fundamental truth of Christianity, that our works proceed from our faith." This house is Mr. Alphonse Koechlin's Establishment for Blind Persons. It is a somewhat extensive, but rather unassuming building. Looking at it from the outside, you would take it for one of those village taverns so common in Germany, which combine the tap-room with the thrashing-floor. And such a tavern it was in former days; but, Mr. Koechlin being enabled to purchase it for his charitable purpose, the temple of

Bacchus was changed into a Bethel; a house of the living God, where the blind learn to see things to which many seeing ones are blind.

Mr. Alphonse Koechlin, a man in the prime of life, was clerk at the *Banque de France* at Mülhausen some fifteen years ago. It was a profitable situation, and pleased him so well, that he threw his whole heart and soul into it. But able as he was to calculate how best to turn gold and silver to profit, he knew little of that treasure which is "more precious than gold, yea, than much fine gold." His merciful Saviour, however, did not allow him to continue in that sad ignorance. In His unfathomable wisdom it seemed necessary that Mr. Koechlin's bodily eyes should be shut, in order that the spiritual eye might be opened. It was in the year 1849 that, owing to his excessive labours late at night, he became subject to a serious ophthalmia. He was obliged to take rest, and gradually recovered so far that he could see again, but only as if looking through a haze. This sore trial set him thinking seriously about the highest concerns of his soul. Left hopeless and helpless by silver and gold, he now betook himself to the Word of God, which speaks of Him who came into the world as a light into a dark place, that they who see not might see. The Bible became his companion both by day and night, and he found the pearl of great price, which made him rejoice in the midst of his distress; for distress again fell upon him with deep gloom. The haze gradually grew into a mist, and the mist at last thickened into complete darkness. His right eye became first totally useless; then his left, and about the year 1852 he found himself wrapped in an

impenetrable night, which no medical skill proved able to dispel.

He was advised to travel to Lausanne, in order to get the advice of the celebrated Dr. Recordon, who was connected with the Asylum for the Blind of that town. He travelled thither in 1854, and was received into the Ophthalmic Hospital of that Establishment, but alas, in vain! After having stayed there a few months he was declared incurable. He yielded with resignation to the will of his heavenly Father. Obedient, submissive as a child, the man of thirty-four years of age requested to be taken into the Asylum as a pupil. But this request could not be complied with. The statutes of the Asylum forbade the reception of a pupil above the age of fourteen.

Since the loss of his eyes, his greatest calamity was that of not being able any more to read his beloved Bible. How great, then, was his joyful surprise when, after having entered the Hospital of the Asylum, he found in his room a copy of the Gospel by Luke, printed in relief with Roman types! Immediately he set himself to work to learn to read by the touch. He succeeded beyond expectation. With a fortnight's exercise his fingers could read the raised print tolerably well. He learnt by heart every line which he deciphered. Thus with indefatigable zeal progressing day by day, he learnt by heart the whole Gospel of Luke within five months. What a blessing to him! Now he should try other portions of the holy book. But, alas, a bitter cup was again poured out to him! The finger-reading proved too much for his nerves. The acuteness of his touch gave way. After having slipped over a page or two with his fingers, the whole

became one confused mass to him. He thought the precious book was lost to him for ever. He put it in a corner, with the melancholy thought that perhaps he might never touch it again. One week elapsed after another, and the poor solitary already began to accustom himself to his dismal fate. But now and then he could not refrain from again passing his fingers over the precious characters. To his great surprise he now found that he could distinguish them as before. Gradually the sense of touch came back. He had successfully passed the crisis. Soon he was perfectly restored. Henceforth he could read his Bible without interruption. It was like life from death to the poor pilgrim through the land of shadows. "This Word of God," he wrote at a later period to a friend, "was my strength at the time when I was refused as a pupil of the Asylum. It was at the same time my leading star, for it suggested to my mind the plan by which I one day might become useful to the blind of France."

He revealed his plan to the Committee of the Asylum. He wanted to become a teacher and preacher to the blind. The Committee gladly permitted him to continue at the Asylum under that title, in order to prepare himself for that excellent task He accomplished his study within three months, and returned to Mülhausen, where he took up his abode at his father's house. A poor blind young man, whom he provided with board and lodging under his father's hospitable roof, was his first pupil. A second one followed soon, and, without the slightest effort on his part, before the year drew to its close, his house lodged eight pupils.

Mr. Jacques Scheidecker, one of the wealthiest citizens of Mülhausen, and himself a blind man, became his friend. He promised an annual gift of 500 francs (£20). This enabled Mr. Koechlin to provide those of his pupils, who were not inhabitants of Mülhausen, with board. lodging, and clothes.

But now two great wants were felt. He had no Bible for his blind friends, nor a suitable house to lodge them comfortably. It was evident that his father's house could only be a temporary abode. Nor was it long before his father was obliged to remove to another dwelling, which could not possibly accommodate the increasing number of pupils. The thought of perhaps being compelled ere long to dismiss his poor fellow-sufferers pained him sadly.

But the Lord granted his desire. He was informed that the tavern at Illzach was on sale for 10,000 francs (£400). Nobody doubted that this building was for the present the best place that could be obtained for his purpose. It only needed a few alterations to make it suitable for an Asylum. And now his good friend Mr. Scheidecker came to his assistance. "It is all the same to me," he said to Mr. Koechlin, "whether I give you 500 francs annually or a capital of 10,000 francs at once." So the tavern was bought without delay. The indispensable alterations, however, and the furnishing required an additional sum of 6000 francs (£240). "Having said A, I must also say B," Mr. Scheidecker thought. He again opened his purse, and paid down the 6000 francs.

So one day in April, 1857, the little company walked down from Mr. Koechlin's house to their new residence

at Illzach; in a touching way realising that well-known promise, "I will lead the blind by a way that they knew not." The clergyman of the place joined the happy friends, and assisted in opening the Institution with a solemn address and prayers. They found a spacious dwelling, a schoolroom, a workshop, where two lathes were waiting for skilful operatives, a barn, a stable, a farmyard, an orchard, a garden and fields. A suitable person was found to take the management of the household. A man skilled in gardening and farming was engaged for the cultivation of the grounds; and so, looking up to God, who "is eyes to the blind," Mr. Koechlin started an Asylum, which is, perhaps, the only one in the world the director of which is as blind as his pupils.

But now the other want was felt all the more painfully. The pupils speaking all of them German as their native tongue, a German Bible printed in relief was indispensable. It is true the knowledge of the Word of God could be imparted to them quite as well by reading it to them. But Mr. Koechlin wanted something more. He would have his blind friends read the Bible and other useful books independently of the aid of those who saw.

Mr. Koechlin could not rest until he had provided his pupils with the whole Word of God. But how to realise this desire! He travelled to Stuttgard to take cognizance of the productions of the printing-press of the Bible Society of that town. He found only two Gospels, the Acts, the Epistle to the Romans, the Psalms, the Biblical History of the Calw Society, and a Spelling-book. Certainly this was much, compared with what there existed of literature for the blind twenty-five years before,

and taking into account the great expense and trouble connected with relief printing. Still it was not nearly enough in Mr. Koechlin's opinion. He could not see why a blind man should be content with only a few fragments of the Bible, whereas Providence had deemed a whole Bible necessary for man. He at once gave an order to the type-foundry of the Stuttgard Society for the types he wanted, and another to a printing-press manufactory at Mülhausen for a press. The latter firm sent the machine with a kind note, in which Mr. Koechlin was requested to accept it as a present.

So there were the types, and here was the press. But where was the printer? This was another difficulty, and not a small one. But help was near. One day he was visited by the brother of his brother-in-law, Mr. E. Sack, who was a printer at Bern. The types and the press were shown to him. He smiled. He did not know what to make of them. Still he tried a few experiments, which turned out tolerably well. It appeared, however, that several implements were wanting, of which he gave a description. Mr. Koechlin obtained them in February, 1857. So now he was completely provided. But again where was the printer? Mr. Sack had returned to Bern, and nobody in the house knew how to manage the thing. Mr. Sack, however, soon made his appearance again. He had been obliged to throw up his printing establishment at Bern, and had come to Alsace, to start a fresh one in that district. He was in no hurry about it. He resolved to spend a few months with the blind, to try what he could do for them. He commenced with printing the Gospel by Mark, at the same time instructing his blind

friends how to take the matter in hand. They assisted him with all enthusiasm. Meanwhile Mr. Koechlin wrote to the Stuttgard Bible Society about the sale of the printed copies. It sent an order for one hundred, with promise to take copies of all the other books of the Bible. The price which this society paid was not sufficient to cover all the expenses; but the Bible Society of Mülhausen, generously stepped in to make up the deficit. Full scope was now given to our blind printers and compositors. Within five years the whole of the New Testament, the Pentateuch, Joshua, the Proverbs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel were printed, and before the year 1863 drew to its close, the whole Bible was finished in sixty-two volumes. It was out of print soon, and the Stuttgard Society had ordered a second edition of three hundred copies. Indeed, without the assistance of the Bible Societies of Stuttgard and of Mülhausen, Mr. Koechlin would have been unable to enrich the blind of Germany with this costly treasure.' It appears from Mr. Koechlin's Reports that the printing of the whole Bible, including the paper, cost 39329·74 francs (£1573, 2s. 2d.). Nearly the whole of this expense has been covered by orders from the Stuttgard Society, together with annual gifts from 100 to 300 francs from the Bible Societies of Mülhausen, Strasburg, and Colmar.

What commends this Bible to the friends of the blind is its amazing cheapness. The sixty-two volumes of which it is composed occupy not less than 7423 pages in quarto; yet it only costs 210·50 francs (£8, 8s. 4d.), viz., 51·35 francs for the New Testament, which contains fifteen volumes, and 159·15 francs for the Old Testament,

which contains forty-seven.* Through a generous gift from Russia the Stuttgard Society was enabled to lower the price to two-thirds, so that the German blind man might buy his Bible for only 150 francs. And it might have been considerably cheaper still, had Mr. Koechlin been able to print with the types of Mr. Braille, who, being a blind man himself, had invented a new system of letters for printing and writing for the 40,000 blind in France. By Mr. Braille's system each letter is represented by a certain number of points.

According to Mr. Koechlin's calculation, it saves one-third of the space occupied by the German system, which consists of the common Roman characters. Indeed, experience has confirmed the correctness of that estimate. The Committee of the Asylum for the Blind at Lausanne, which commenced printing the French Bible with the Braille type in 1861, has printed the whole New Testament in eight volumes, each of which is not larger than any of the fifteen volumes, of which Mr. Koechlin's German New Testament consists. The Braille system has also the advantage of enabling the blind to write on a writing-board expressly made for the purpose. This board consists of a simple plank perforated all over the surface with little holes, into which little pegs provided with knobs are stuck. I saw Mr. Koechlin and his pupils stick words and sentences on that writing-board with a quickness quite amazing. He can thus give pupils grammatical exercises and arithmetical calculations,

* Moon's Bible for the Blind, which, so far as I can ascertain, is the only complete Bible for the blind printed in English, consists of 65 parts (*stitched*), and costs £17, 16s. 6d. Bound, it occupies from 45 to 50 volumes, and comes to about £20.

which he looks, or rather touches, over, and corrects. The same instrument is also used for writing music. Several hymns and songs for one and more voices are printed with the Braille system, and Mr. Koechlin's pupils sing them at the touch with the same facility with which we sing them at sight.

But Mr. Koechlin did not perform his excellent task of printing the Bible without opposition from various quarters. The irreligious people, while lauding his Institution from a philanthropic point of view, found fault with its decisively religious tendency, and disapproved of the great expense which was being bestowed upon the printing of a book, the use of which for the blind they could not conceive. More unexpected, and, indeed, distressing, was the opposition of the Protestant clergy of a neighbouring country, the President of the Consistory of which wrote to the Stuttgard Bible Society that a great number of the ministers belonging to that country disapproved of the printing of the Old Testament, especially of the prophecies of Daniel and Isaiah, since these books were too hard to be understood without the aid of Commentaries. Mr. Koechlin replied that "*all* Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness."

After the printing-office, Mr. Koechlin's school-room deserves our attention. Its architecture is capable of much improvement. Its ceiling is rather low. Owing to want of space in the house the school-room is combined with the workshop of the labouring pupils. This, of course, causes a great many inconveniences, which Mr. Koechlin feels rather painfully. He himself is the

teacher. He commenced his instruction in 1857 with six pupils. At the close of the year five of them were able to read and to write in German. The elements of the French were learnt by three. The next year seven could read and write in German, and six in French. In 1860 eleven pupils could read and write in both languages. So, the number of pupils who were saved from ignorance, and rendered fit for social life, increased from year to year. Gradually Mr. Koechlin introduced the other branches of elementary teaching into his school, such as arithmetic, cosmography, geography, natural history, German and French grammar, and music. Soon some were sufficiently advanced to learn to play the piano and the organ. The performances of the pupils in singing in three and four parts are indeed worth hearing. To assist their instruction, Mr. Koechlin has caused them to found a library of books written by themselves, with embossing types. This library contains 200 German hymns, with the tunes of most of them; a German Catechism; 100 French hymns, with their tunes; some religious treatises, preparative for the Lord's Supper; a large collection of arithmetical problems upon all the rules; an extract from the German Grammar; some fragments of a Scripture Concordance; an almanac; a comparative table of existing coins; a table for the conversion of the old, new, and foreign weights and measures; a table of the elevations of the globe above the level of the sea; diagrams of the chief elements of the solar system, etc. Thus Mr. Koechlin engages his pupils in useful exercises, which cannot fail to have a beneficial bearing upon the refinement of their intellect and the increase of their general

knowledge. Nor does he limit the blessing of his instruction to his pupils alone. Books are gladly lent to blind people out of doors, and instruction is imparted to them in reading. Owing to this benevolent arrangement, several blind individuals of the surrounding district have learnt to read the Bible.

Those of the male pupils, whose health and constitution present no obstacle to the performance of handicraft, are taught to make chairs, or shoes and slippers. These, together with the printing, are the only trades hitherto taught at the Establishment. Mr. Koechlin would be glad to add some other trades, such as basket and filigree work; but the straitness of the locality compels him to postpone the carrying out of this plan to a future period. The making of mats for chairs enables those who are perfectly skilled in that trade, to earn their board, lodging, and clothing, which is fixed at 400 francs per annum (£16). In 1861 three pupils left the Establishment, to enter situations, one as a mat-maker, one as a printer, and one as a female teacher.

The girls, besides learning knitting, sewing, crocheting, etc., are used to domestic labour, and trained as servants and housekeepers. They make their own beds, tidy the bedrooms, lay down and remove the table-cloth, wash the dishes, peal apples and potatoes, dry and fold the cloths, etc. Mr. Koechlin thinks they also will be able to learn cooking, spinning, and some other kinds of labour.

Mr. Koechlin has placed his Establishment under the supervision of a *comité de patronage*, consisting of seven members, of which he himself is one, in his capacity as

the director of the house. The clergyman of the village is its president; the other members are respectable manufacturers and landowners of Mülhausen and the neighbouring places. The financial administration is done by Mr. Koechlin. The annual account of 1862–63 shows a total expenditure of 17,073·35 francs (£683), which was covered by the income, leaving a surplus of 593·55 fr. (£23, 15s. 6d.). Nearly two-thirds of this income, viz., 12,287·15 fr. (£419, 10s.) consisted of voluntary contributions chiefly from Mülhausen, Strasburg, and Bischwiller, which is a town not far from Strasburg. On the list of subscriptions, London appears with 40 fr. (£1, 12s.) and Paris with 10 fr. Six pupils paid their boarding, lodging, and clothing, to the full amount of 2400 fr. (£96) by the profit derived from their labour. A capital of 31,000 fr. (£1240) was at the bank, which was being kept in reserve for paying a portion of the expected enlargement of the house. The cost of the support of a pupil averages between 410 fr. to 450 fr. (£16 to £18), which is not extravagant, taking into account the particular care which blind people require, and the infirmity of most of the children, who are subject to scrofulous and scorbutic diseases.

Mr. Koechlin imposes no other condition to those whom he admits but that they must be blind. Whether poor or rich, young or aged, Protestant or Roman Catholic, they are all welcome; and, if any one is refused, it is simply from want of space. This is all the more admirable, as the burden and responsibility of the whole concern rests solely upon his shoulders. It is true he has fixed a sum of 400 fr. for the boarding of a pupil;

but I have only to mention, that out of the fifteen pupils whom I found at his Establishment, only one was paid for, and it will be clear that this is not a source of income to depend upon. Mr. Koechlin entirely depends upon the strong and faithful arm of his heavenly Father who hears prayer, and looks down upon the blind with tender compassion. Nor has his faith been put to shame hitherto. The records of the six years during which the Establishment has been in existence, tell their own story about the solidity of that invisible but sure foundation upon which this good man has built his house. Nor can anything short of that be expected, where the object of the training and teaching is not merely to render the pupils useful for society, but also fit for heaven. For little is gained for blind persons if they only are made to feel their bodily blindness less painfully during this short life here below. Mr. Koechlin tries through Christ to secure to them the best of all organs, a pure heart, which enables a man to see God. And I do not marvel that such a work meets with all the sympathy of Him, who came from heaven to perform the same work among us poor blind denizens of this dark world, opening the eyes of our souls to the awful danger we have to escape, shewing us the way towards the country of everlasting light and life, and instructing us in all that is required for a conversation in a society, which will manifest all the glory and beauties of its holiness and happiness, when the kingdoms of this earth will have passed away like a morning cloud.

THE AGRICULTURAL COLONY OF SAINTE FOY.

(DEPARTMENT DE GIRONDE, FRANCE.)



I

Sainte Foy—Mr. and Mrs. Martin, and the Establishment which they superintend.

STE. FOY is in the department of Dordogne, which is literally a land flowing with milk and honey. It is one of the most important country places for the Protestant Church of France. Nearly half of its population, which is about 4000, confess the evangelical creed. It has an excellent preparatory college, where more than 100 young men are being trained for the holy ministry, under the direction of Mr. de Félice, who in his important work is assisted by eleven professors and inspectors. By the side of that excellent Institution the Normal School of Madame Delhorbe occupies a distinguished place. Here young females are trained as school teachers in an evangelical spirit. Other young ladies, who have no special vocation, are also admitted to finish their education. It is not an establishment of mere private speculation, but to a certain extent, one of Christian charity; for, after paying the expenses, the surplus is devoted to enabling

poor girls to enjoy the instruction of the house at a reduced price.

The character of the soil being only slightly undulating, the aspect of the scenery is on the whole flat; and it would be quite uninteresting and monotonous had not human skill and industry turned it into a charming landscape. The town is a dirty place, especially in winter time, and the suspension-bridge, which is of a very simple construction, appeared to me so badly paved, that I wondered what all those halfpennies people had to pay each time they passed were used for. A quarter of a mile's walk up the left bank of the river took me to the Colony, the extensive premises of which are visible from the bridge, and situated almost opposite the town. Here you have an opportunity of at once enjoying the agreeable contrast which the extraordinary cleanliness of this estate presents to the filth of the town. A fresh wholesome atmosphere breathes around you, and everything displays a spirit of order and purity. A well-kept country-road, running along a row of premises, which contain the dormitories and workshops of the Colony, leads you up to a nice garden-gate, through which you can see the dwelling of Mr. Martin, the director. This spacious, two-storied, nicely-painted house, which is built in a straight line with the other premises, faces a beautiful and extensive garden, which slopes down to the river. Walking up the stone steps that lead to the front door, you are struck with the charming panorama spread out before you. Calmly and majestically the Dordogne pushes on its rapid waters, that reflect the white-plastered houses of the town on the opposite beach. Little boats, waiting for their freight, or in

the process of loading, rock up and down with the waving, limpid current as it were in playful sportiveness To the right the horizon is broken by the suspension bridge, which partly steals away behind the nice little chapel of the Colony To the left your eyes rove as far as they can over a vast, boundless plain, covered with vineyards, meadows, and corn-fields, and dotted here and there with



Director's House, and part of the Establishment

little groves, while at several spots the river peeps out from the luxuriant verdure as if wanting to show that in this charming drawing room of creation the all reflecting mirror had not been forgotten

Attractive as the view outside the house is to the senses, it can yet stand no comparison with what the eye of the mind witnesses within It is the highly blessed work of a happy couple, now in the autumn of life, who

for upwards of twenty years have looked up to their beloved Saviour, and have devoted heart and soul to the noble task of plucking young prisoners, neglected orphans, and abandoned children, out of the misery that threatened to ruin them for time and eternity.

"Thanks to God," said Mr. Martin, when the question as to the results of their work was put, "I think I am justified in saying that our children leave the house in a condition which the world would term 'morally clean.' With the exception of only ten per cent. who turn out badly, they all re-enter society as useful and respectable members. They have given up swearing and filthy talk, they have learnt to obey, to do their duty, and to assort with an orderly and decent life. Only the inclination towards theft will sometimes stir up again within a few, even after years of the most irreproachable conduct. That habit, if an hereditary propensity, seems to be almost inextinguishable. But, leaving out these few instances from our calculation, I dare to say that the purely moral restoration, even of the most perverted children, is all but certain, provided they do not come at too advanced an age. Now surely this is something, so far as human society is regarded, and looking at that result, we thankfully acknowledge that our work is not altogether in vain."

We began our inspection of the premises. First came the girls' house, to which we were led up by a wooden staircase in the hall of the Director's house. There is accommodation for twelve girls; but at present there are only four. Each girl has her own little bedroom. The twelve bedrooms are on the first floor, six on each side of a passage. The little windows, which are cut in the upper

part of the wall, beyond the reach of the girls, are provided with iron staves. Experience has dictated this precaution. During the night the doors, which all open into the passage, are locked outside, but a square hole, provided with a shifting lid inside, is cut in the upper part of the door, so as to make communication possible in case of need. At the end of the passage is a bedroom, occupied by a surveyor, and a large lavatory furnished with the required washing apparatus for each girl. The wooden bedsteads contain a good mattress and pillow of maize straw, and two blankets, fully sufficient to keep the children warm in the winter season. All this was marked by perfect cleanness and order, as well as by simplicity and wise arrangement. Descending a staircase we entered a spacious apartment, the dining-room of the surveyors, of whom there are ten. Next to this is a sewing-room, through which we passed on into the laundry, where we found two of the girls assisting the surveyors in ironing the clothes of this numerous household. A first-rate kitchen, with its colossal boiler and furnace, finishes the list of apartments in this part of the Establishment.

Clean, orderly and well arranged as everything was, yet this part of the house made a less favourable impression upon me than the premises occupied by the boys. The fact is, that the girls' house, part of which is the dwelling of the Director, is the primitive establishment, which was built on a very small scale; it being supposed at the time of the foundation of the Colony that a house capable of lodging only from twenty to thirty boys and girls, would be large enough for the purpose. This mistake arose from the declaration of the Minister of State, that there

were not above twenty-eight children of the Protestant creed in all the prisons of France. Nor were more recorded upon the prison rolls. It soon turned out, however, that there were in reality more than three times that number. In the second year of the existence of the Colony it already numbered twenty-two pupils. So the house soon proved by far too small. A spacious boys' house was then added, and the old house was kept for the girls; but it bears everywhere the marks of having originally been built for a different object from what it is now being used for. There is a want of architectural order, which gives a rather confused appearance to the whole.

Passing to the boys' house we stepped across a backyard, which was on one side lined by the prison cells, of which there are nine. These are square little closets, measuring eight feet by six, with clean whitewashed walls. They were all empty, and bore marks of not being frequently used.

The boys' house is an oblong building, which in every respect answers its purpose. The ground-floor is occupied by a large dining-room, capable of accommodating more than one hundred boys, and by a succession of four or five workshops, each of which has a door opening into the public road, which runs alongside the premises. We found half a dozen little boys engaged in plaiting a certain kind of bulrushes for mats, which appear to be a considerable source of income of the Establishment. They are, indeed, very strong and nice-looking, and, as far as I could judge, equal to the best hemp mats. In another shop some taller boys were being instructed in the making of clogs or wooden shoes. The other shops,

viz., for carpentering, tailoring, etc., were not occupied at the time I saw them, the boys being all away at their work in the fields.

On the first floor are the schools, which, in respect of ventilation, leave nothing to be desired. The ceiling appeared to me to be too low, in consequence of which, the light was not so profuse as it should be. The children are divided into three classes, which can be separated or united by means of curtains, as may be desired.

The second floor is occupied by three dormitories, one of them large, containing from fifty to sixty beds, and two smaller ones. They are situated behind each other, so that, the middle doors being opened, one can look through all three, from one end to the other. The smaller one is occupied by boys under thirteen, the next by boys from thirteen to sixteen, the third and largest one by boys above sixteen. In each dormitory a bed is occupied by one of the surveyors. I saw no bars at the windows. I suppose they are not required, so many sleeping together in one room, and the windows being some thirty feet above the road. There is also an infirmary here, containing seven beds, which presented the agreeable view of being quite unoccupied. It is a very comfortable, cheerful-looking room, where everything is well adapted to dispel gloomy thoughts from the minds of the patients.

Opposite the workshops, on the other side of the road, is the little chapel, built in the form of a Latin cross. Its simple but tastefully-shaped walnut pulpit faces a gallery which covers the entrance. Mr. Martin preaches here every Sunday to his pupils, and to many a hearer from the town. This sanctuary is the gift of Christian friends

in London. Its construction cost 6000 francs. Five thousand francs were collected partly at a drawing-room meeting which R. Hanbury, Esq., M.P., assembled in May 1857, in the presence of the Rev. Mr. Armand Delille, Secretary to the Committee, A. Kinnaird, Esq., M.P., the Rev. Messrs. Auriol, Baptist Noel, Herschell, etc., and partly at a sermon which was preached the next Sunday in favour of the Colony.

The inspection of a little tailor's shop, about twenty yards from the chapel, closed our tour through the premises. Behind that little building is a lavatory for the washerwomen, who, sheltered under awnings, wash the clothes of the inmates of the house in a large basin, which, being uncovered, allows the vapour of the warm water to escape freely.

We returned to the director's room to resume our conversation about the Colony and the training of the children. The interesting communications which I was favoured with caused the hours to fly away like minutes. How short time appears to minds engaged in matters of such vital importance! The hour approached at which the coach for Mussidan was to start. Mr. Martin guided me through his garden down to the beach. The boatman, who was lying in his skiff at the opposite shore, was hailed, and he sent his "*Oui, Monsieur*" across the water. His word, however, proved much readier than his work. We did not see him make the slightest effort to stir his boat, so I found that I had to take the bridge or lose the coach. With a cordial pressure of hands I took leave of my kind host, and as I hastened along the river-side, I could not forbear looking back from time

to time, to revive my impressions of this interesting spot, where I had spent some of the happiest hours of my journeys.

II

History of the Origin of the Colony—The "Société des Intérêts Généraux du Protestantisme"—The Director Mr Martin

The Colony of Sainte Foy owes its existence to the spirit of religious liberty which, under the providence of God, entered France with the fall of the Bourbon dynasty in 1830. Before that date the Protestant Church of the country found itself in a very unsettled condition. It was tolerated as a sect which it was impossible to get rid of, but looked upon by the clergy and the bigoted Government very much as the Samaritans were looked upon by the Jews. The spirit of political liberty which dawned with the Revolution and the first empire, had cleared the minds of the people from many mediæval prejudices, and rendered the return of such an atrocity as that of Bartholomew's night out of the question. Still in the South many a sad repetition was tried on a smaller scale. The Popish religion was re-established as the religion of the State, and the Government was eager enough to restore it in all the rigour of its priestcraft. But to attain this end, a cautiousness was observed from which the Protestants in the North for the time being derived the benefit of an unmolested though rather stifled existence. In those days it was no easy matter

for the Protestant churches to obtain the assistance of Government in the redress of the wrongs they were suffering, or its permission to exercise their rights. In a public way nothing could be gained; but by private applications to influential men, through an endless apparatus of introductions and recommendations, something might be effected. A good Protestant parson, a wealthy man of the name of Mr. Soulié, at that period earned the thanks of his oppressed brethren by devoting all his time, talents, and means to their interests. He was their mediator and advocate with the highly-placed individuals; and when in those days a Protestant's claim was acknowledged or a petition granted, the success was in most cases owing to the indefatigable and well-applied energy of that faithful servant of God.

His death was a great loss to the Protestant Church of France. Everybody had then to try to find his own way without a guide. Owing to want of unity, want of knowledge of the laws, and want of knowledge even of the rights of the Church, hundreds of petitions and reclamations were sent adrift, like snow-flakes tossed about by a whirlwind. Happily the revolution of 1830 put a stop to that unsettled state of things. The new charter abolished the principle of an established religion. All denominations were placed on a footing of equality. Favours were no longer to be humbly petitioned for; rights were to be claimed. A new agent was required, who, with the law of the country in his hand and well instructed in the wants and rights of the Church, could protect its possessions and guide its proceedings. It was

evident that this was a task by far too comprehensive for one man. A Society was formed in 1842, with the name of *Société des Intérêts généraux du Protestantisme Français.* Such men as the noble Admiral Verhuell, the Counts de Gasparin, and the ministers Frederic Monod and Napoleon Roussel. were among the members of its Committee. It was founded upon a truly catholic basis. All Protestant churches, whether Calvinistic or Lutheran, Presbyterian or Independent, were alike represented in this Society.

One of the first subjects to which the Society turned its attention was the condition of the juvenile Protestant prisoners. Not only were they destitute of any moral training whatever, but also entirely exposed to the proselytism of the Popish *propaganda.* Most of them were never reported as Protestant children. They were blended with the great bulk of their Roman Catholic fellow-prisoners, and with them instructed in the Popish doctrine and worship. This happened with the knowledge of the prison officers, who went hand in hand with the clergy. A child might object on account of its being a Protestant; it was ordered to be silent. Parents might send in their complaints; they were not heard. By dint of promises and threats, of rewards and punishments, many a child was put in awe of its fanatical teachers, and made to believe that its perversion to the Roman Catholic Church was the only way to escape hell. The Reports of the Society mention many instances of the difficulties it had to grapple with before it could extricate a young Protestant prisoner from this process of moral poisoning.

This state of things could not but incite the Society to leave no stone unturned till all the young Protestant prisoners were delivered from such pernicious influence. Even on the part of the Roman Catholic philanthropists a voice was raised against the putting of young prisoners into the same gaol with adult criminals. Counseller Mr. Demetz, who is the founder of the well-known colony for juvenile prisoners at Mettray, near Tours, was one of the first who directed the attention of the Government to that subject. Being a member of one of the Courts at Paris, he was perfectly acquainted with the condition of the imprisoned children. The law of France permitted the acquittal of children accused of crime, on the ground of their having acted without discernment; but ordered them to be kept under the guardianship of the State for a certain number of years, to be trained for a moral life. This article of the law was carried into practice by detaining the children in central prisons, where, instead of being trained for a moral life, they were enabled to learn every kind of wickedness from their adult fellow-prisoners. Mr. Demetz emphatically opposed that system, and having given up his place at the Court, started that excellent Colony at Mettray, where nearly 600 boys are at present being educated for an orderly life in society. His colony is, however, an exclusively Roman Catholic institution, and, following the dictates of common sense, he has from the outset refused the admission of a Protestant boy. But he spoke strongly in favour of the foundation of a Protestant Colony. The Minister of State also promised the concurrence and support of the Government, and declared that he would be glad to entrust the Protestant juvenile

convicts to the care of the Society if a Protestant Mettray were founded.' The Society could no longer doubt what course it was best to take. Subscriptions were collected for buying a suitable tract of land at Sainte Foy, a place equally famous for its Protestant spirit and its agricultural excellence. The plan met with general sympathy. Even the young girls at the schools founded by Oberlin worked for a bazaar on behalf of the Colony. The property, which consisted of four hectares with a house, was bought for 24,000 francs.

Meanwhile inquiries were made for a suitable man as director. Three qualifications were required in him: he ought to be a Christian man, a good teacher, and an able agriculturist. These are points not often combined in one man. There may be many more variously-gifted persons in the world than is supposed; but the difficulty is to find them. They often live at remote spots, at some little farm in a lonely valley, or at some school-house in an unknown rural village. The director whom Providence had destined for the new Colony lived at a place where certainly the Committee would not have sought him, had not some friends directed attention to him. Mr. Martin, then a man of about forty, was pastor of the small Protestant church of Rhé, a little island in the Bay of Biscay. He was one of the many individuals who, through the agency of that godly man Felix Neff, were brought to a clear knowledge of the Gospel and to the service of Christ. Impelled by an irresistible desire to preach the Gospel to his fellow-beings, he left the little Alpine valley where he was born and trained, to study theology at the faculty of Montauban. The little church of Rhé offered

him a charge to his taste. There, on an island eighteen miles long and four broad, dotted with vine-clad hills, he found the quietude of the rural valley where he had spent his youth; while his little flock offered full scope for his heart's desire to feed the sheep of Christ, both young and old.

But the directorship of the Colony having been offered him, Mr. and Mrs. Martin removed to Sainte Foy in 1843. Twelve months elapsed before the first young colonists made their appearance. What was the reason of this delay nobody can tell; neither Mr. Martin nor the Committee ever learnt it. It was a period of trying suspense for the good couple, as well as for the Committee. Rumours were spread that the Government, influenced by the Roman Catholic clergy, had changed its mind and was about to retract. A teacher and an agriculturist had been engaged; but there was no work for them. At length, however, the colonists came. There were twenty-eight Protestant juvenile convicts in the prisons, and how many of them did the Government send? Only six.

Still Mr. Martin was only too glad to see some arrive at last. They were pitiful-looking children indeed. The gloom of the prison was reflected in their appearance. Want of exercise had bleached their cheeks; the damp, close prison air had weakened their nerves. Some of them were so weak, that they staggered as if they were drunk. They could neither read nor write. Of God and eternity they knew scarcely anything; but they had heard a great deal of late about the Virgin Mary. Here was a good work to be done; and Mr. Martin addressed himself to it with heart and soul.



PAUL FERDINAND MARTIN

III.

Organisation and Family Life of the Colony

It was a gratifying thing that out of a population of at least one million and a half of Protestants, only from twenty to thirty children should be found in prison. But it was as strange as gratifying, especially since it was well known that there were thousands of Protestants in the country who were not so returned in the census, but went under the name of Catholics. Among these were many paupers. Moreover numbers of poor people poured in every year from Germany, and of these also many were Protestants. Strong misgivings as to the correctness of the official statements regarding the prisons were entertained. The members of the Committee drew the attention of the Protestant pastors to the matter. Accurate inquiries were made at the prisons, and the Government, to its credit, afforded every possible opportunity to the Protestants to subject the returns of the gaols to a close examination. Many concealed Protestant children were thus brought to light. The Catholic clergy and the sisters of charity put every obstacle in the way; but the Government did justice to the claims of the wronged party, and the law of the country was maintained against the schemes of jesuitical proselytism.

These proceedings soon swelled the number of colonists at Sainte Foy. Besides, as the Colony was a private philanthropic institution, other parties also sent such children as required a stricter control than could be

exercised at their homes. These were called vicious children (*enfants vicieux*), whereas those who were sent by the Government were called detained children (*enfants détenus*). Thus the number of colonists increased every year. In 1846 there were 40, and ten years later there were 129. At the time I saw the colony (November 1864) the number was 93.

This success could not fail to call forth the jealousy of adversaries. Calumny was, of course, resorted to in order to prejudice public opinion against the heretical Establishment.

Beating is strictly forbidden at the Colony. The ordinary punishments consist in the boys being prohibited from playing, or in being deprived of butcher's meat. Gross transgressions are punished with imprisonment in the cells, and in very bad cases in a dark cell. A desirable influence is exercised upon the boys by the system of marks. A bad mark is given for the slightest trespass against the rules of the establishment; such as for talking during meals, for walking irregularly in the files, or making the beds badly, etc. This plan excited emulation among them, each one trying to come out as favourably as possible at the close of the month. The result was very encouraging

There was only one whose bad marks surpassed his good ones; and even many of those who behaved badly at first, gradually improved so as to shew a favourable list at the close of the year. Now this may be considered as a gratifying result, taking into account the low origin of those poor creatures; for out of 223 of them

135 were of poor and indigent parents.

113 were orphans, or either fatherless or motherless.
40 were illegitimate.
18 of parents unknown.
9 of divorced parents.
45 had an ill-famed father.
60 had an ill-famed mother.
46 had either father or mother in prison.
2 had both parents in prison.

No wonder that sometimes severe measures of discipline had to be resorted to in the case of such children, especially in the first year of their stay at the Colony. Still the history of the Institution during the twenty-two years of its existence shews that the confinements in the cells has decreased with every year. This is owing to the general spirit of the colonists, as a body, having become better and nobler under the constant influence of a faithful Christian education. There is a public opinion amongst these boys, which exercises a beneficial check upon new comers. One of the most telling facts confirmatory of this is the comparatively small number of runaways. While at other Reformatories in France runaways amount to from twenty to thirty in a year, this Colony only counts one or two, notwithstanding that the place lies open on all sides, and that the boys, when labouring in the fields, can escape at any moment. There has even been many years in which no escape took place at all. Badly trained, disorderly, and savage, as most of the children are when they come to the Colony, yet all of them evince a gradually increasing desire to become better men. From time to time some touching evidences of good feeling, of kindheartedness,

and compassion for other unhappy fellow-beings, encourage Mr. Martin in his noble task. Sometimes a boy leaves his dinner untouched, requesting that it may be sent to his poor parents. On one occasion, when a certain district was visited by a fearful famine, sixty colonists presented a petition, requesting that they might be permitted for some time to dine without butcher meat, in order that the price of it might be given to the poor sufferers. Out of their poverty they even sent twenty-four francs to the sufferers from the inundations in Holland in 1861. Sometimes a boy receives an unpaid letter, and cannot afford to pay the postage from his little pocket-money; but in a moment a collection is made, and the postman receives his threepence.

Besides the regular family services every morning and evening, the children attend a catechising once a week, which is held for the express purpose of imparting to them a satisfactory knowledge of the Bible. Secular school knowledge is imparted during two hours every day. The pupils are divided into three classes, of which the first reads and writes well and is versed in the first rules of arithmetic. More than half of the colonists come to the Colony unable to read and write; none of them leave it without being able to compose and write a letter with ease. Singing, too, is taught. Some forty of the boys form a choir, which sings easy pieces in four parts.

The family rises in summer at 4, in winter at 6, and goes to bed at $9\frac{1}{4}$. Breakfast at 8, dinner at 1, supper at 8. Family worship at $8\frac{3}{4}$ A.M., and at $8\frac{3}{4}$ P.M.

The greater portion of the day is devoted to handi-

craft and agricultural labour. Of the ninety-three boys who were at the Colony when I visited it, three were taught carpentering, nine tailoring, four slipper-making, five were employed in domestic work, eight in the garden, and sixty-four in the vineyard.



IV

Difficulties—Prospects of the Colony—Statistics, etc.

THE Colony has to struggle with some difficulties, which exercise a considerable check upon its development.

The first and greatest difficulty arises from a want of land. The Colony possesses at present twenty-seven hectares,* both arable and vine land. Taking the average number of colonists at a hundred, there is little more than one-fifth of a hectare to each colonist. Now, the calculation is that there should be a hectare for every colonist, to make the Colony self-supporting. At present the boys must be hired out to work to the neighbouring farmers, who very much desire them. But such work, being often done at a considerable distance from the Colony, is connected with a great many inconveniences. It takes the boys away from the school; it wearies them out, as they have often to march a couple of miles there and back, in addition to the work of the day; and, what is worst of all, it estranges them from the family life of

* A hectare is equal to nearly 2½ acres.

the Colony. They mingle with other labourers, whose conversation is not always good for them. It is true they go out in bands, each under the leading of a surveyor; but what can one man do, when the boys are scattered over the fields? Here, too, the temptation to run away is very great. If a boy chooses to throw down his tools and to pounce into a corn-field or a copse, the surveyor must leave him alone; for, were he to run after him, perhaps more boys, stimulated by the example, would take to their heels. This *travail fait au dehors* is a real bore to the Colony. To put a stop to it, a purchase of at least sixty hectares would be necessary. But a hectare in the vicinity of Sainte Foy sells at from £160 to £200! Thus a sum of from £10,000 to £12,000 sterling would be required to get the Colony into smooth water. This is not a very large sum in England, where instances are not rare of a similar or even a larger sum being bestowed by one individual upon the building of a church or chapel; but it is a large sum for Protestants in France, where Protestantism is not the religion of the nation, and the wealthy have their hands filled with the support of poor churches and ill-salaried ministers. Indeed, the Society deserves our admiration for having succeeded so far as to acquire property to the value of from £5000 to £6000. At only *one* meeting in 1856, nearly £480 was collected; and from gifts and legacies the Committee was enabled in 1864 to purchase a vineyard of the value of nearly £800.

The difficulty of having the boys labouring so far away from home might, to a considerable extent, be removed by putting a greater number of them in the workshops.

But here another obstacle arises: the Government permits only twelve boys to learn a trade, the rest must become agriculturists. As stated before, I found that the division of labour at the Colony was arranged according to this. Only three boys learnt carpentering, and nine tailoring. Mat-making is taught, but is only practised by the boys in bad weather. There were also four who learnt slipper or clog-making, but this was only during the bad season; in summer they join their comrades in the fields. Taking these four, and the eight who learn gardening, together with the sixty-four who work in the fields and vineyards. we find that out of ninety-three boys, seventy-six are compelled to become agriculturists. Now if half of these were trained at the workshops, only thirty-eight would be left for the fields and vineyards; and this number would find all but sufficient employment on the twenty-seven hectares of the Colony, without being compelled to seek for work at the neighbouring farms or vineyards. But then, again, a great financial difficulty would occur. The Colony would then lose the 8000 francs which the boys earn annually in the service of the neighbouring farmers, and it is not likely that this loss would be made up by the sale of articles manufactured at the shops. On the contrary, an annual increase of expenditure, say of 2000 francs, would perhaps be required for paying the teachers, etc., which, together with the loss of the above-mentioned 8000, would come to 10,000 francs annually. It is therefore evident that the Colony labours under the pressure either of want of soil or of capital. This is all the more to be regretted, because it must also have an unfavourable bearing upon the formation of the character of

the pupils. Compelling boys to become agriculturists is not a naturally sound system of training, and such compulsion must take place where, out of ninety-three boys, only twelve are permitted to learn a trade. It is true the French are to a considerable extent an agricultural nation, but not more so, I presume, than the Dutch. Now it was shown at the Dutch Mettray, where it is left optional to the boys to choose their profession, that out of a hundred boys, forty-two chose a trade, because they were either unfit for, or had an aversion to, agricultural work. I do not wonder that many of the Sainte Foy boys, after having left the Colony, enter the army. They are said to make good soldiers. And this is certainly a result which the French Government does not regret.

Want of capital may also account for the boys being formed into only one family. Their division into small families, after the Rauhe Haus and Mettray system, would require too great an expenditure for building purposes, etc., and occupy too much of the valuable territory of the Colony. And this, too, may account for the unfavourable result of the training of the girls. Indeed, I was sorry to learn that the Committee had felt compelled to give up the training of girls altogether. There were only four when I saw the Colony; and their number is not to be increased by a fresh supply. So there is no Establishment in France at the present time for training female juvenile convicts of the Protestant creed. The Deaconess houses at Strasburg and Paris take a few of them, but the greater number are unprovided for. This is a deplorable state of things, not only for the girls, but also for the Colony. What I have said about drawbacks arising

from the exclusion of the female element at the Dutch Mettray is also applicable to the Colony of Sainte Foy. That this element should be lacking here is all the more to be regretted, since no wiser, more amiable and tender-hearted mother could be desired for poor neglected girls than Mrs. Martin. But I can see that, to enable her to apply her talents and cares with the prospect of good results, arrangements would require to be made such as the present condition of the Colony scarcely admits of.

Notwithstanding these disadvantages, the Colony may be said to be in a progressive state. It enjoys in a high measure the sympathy of the members of all the Protestant denominations. And no wonder. For although the results of the training of the girls have been unfavourable, the training of the boys has proved a success. When only ten per cent. of such youths turn out unfavourably, it is clear that the trouble and care bestowed upon them are not fruitless. The letters of the colonists who have left the establishment, and of parties who bear testimony to their conduct, afford agreeable and often affecting reading.

In the army the colonists of Sainte Foy have a good name. Many have risen to the rank of sergeant. Some are decorated with military and other medals. One cannot even wear all his medals, from want of room on his chest.

These are very encouraging results. Many of them are, under God's blessing, owing to Mr. Martin's zealous endeavours to maintain his influence over his pupils after their departure from the Colony. Perhaps the best plan would be to request the ministers to look out for such individuals in their respective churches as would be willing to charge themselves with the patronage of the colonists.

The number of pupils who have been trained at the Colony since its beginning till the close of 1864, was 537; 403 being detained boys, 29 detained girls, 85 vicious boys, and 20 vicious girls.

The Government used to pay 80 centimes a day for the support of a colonist, but has reduced this sum to 70 centimes, which comes to 255½ francs, or £10, 4s. 4d. a year. The terms for vicious children are 300 francs. The Colony accepts no children gratuitously, but many at half-pay. The Committee, however, has seven purses (six of 300 francs, and one at 150) at its disposal, which were raised by voluntary subscriptions in 1852 and 1853. The first of these purses was made up by Mr. M. P. Cook, in the name of young people of Paris. Eighty francs are to be paid for the *trousseau*, which must contain 2 pairs of trousers, 1 vest, 3 shirts, 1 waistcoat, 1 cap, 1 pair of shoes, 3 handkerchiefs, 2 cravats, 1 comb, and 1 brush. The period of a boy's stay is usually from four to five years.

The Colony was recognised as an *Etablissement d'utilité publique* in 1863. As usual, the Government imposed two conditions: 1, that the Colony had no debts; 2, that it could show sufficient resources for subsistence. It is inspected once every year by an officer of the Government. The reports of these inspectors have always been very favourable to the Colony. They often declared that they were struck with the great difference which existed between this Colony, based upon the evangelical principle and supported by voluntary contributions, and those penitentiaries which employed the children only for purposes of profit.

ESTABLISHMENTS OF MR. J. BOST AT LAFORCE.

(DORDOGNE.)

I.

How Mr. Bost commenced a work of Charity at Laforce, and made a happy Schoolmaster of a miserable Beggar.

LAFORCE is a small village situated on the top of a hill, at about three miles from Bergerac, in the Department of Dordogne. The Protestants of that place, who form by far the minority of the population, seceded from the Protestant *National* Church about the year 1845, on account of some controversies with the *consistoire* concerning the election of a pastor. "This circumstance," Mr. Goy writes, "might have proved fatal to those people, by throwing them into a movement of opposition which could not be very favourable to the development of their Christian life. Happily it had not this effect upon them. They were so fortunate as to find in Mr. John Bost a pastor who was perfectly qualified for his delicate mission. Being a man full of faith and zeal, and, notwithstanding the very peculiar and very stereotyped form of his doctrinal convictions, animated by a truly Christian and large-

hearted spirit, he took the position of the congregation as *un fait accompli*, though he was not at all, from principle, opposed to the *National* Church. In this spirit he constantly exerted himself to raise his flock above ecclesiastical prejudices, to extinguish party spirit, and to turn their minds towards a devout, active, Christian life."

Even before he was a minister, and while yet preparing himself for the pulpit, Mr. Bost had conceived a plan which gained in clearness every day. He had observed that there was a sad defect in the Protestant charitable Establishments of France; that they were too much bound by rules and regulations. The orphan-houses, for instance, were not at liberty to take a child under six or above 12, nor were they permitted to open their doors for illegitimate or abandoned children. Mr. Bost was of opinion that a poor orphan of five or thirteen years needed no less help than one of six or twelve, and that a child which had lost its parents through desertion was quite as miserable as another child which had lost its parents through death. He resolved to found a house of refuge for such children. It should at the same time be a place of training for such poor Protestant children as were living too far from any Protestant school, and consequently were in danger of becoming the prey of Popish proselytism at the Roman Catholic schools.

No sooner had Mr. Bost taken up his residence at Laforce than he set to work to realise his plan. As it was a matter of Christian charity which regarded the whole Protestant Church, he felt entitled to claim the sympathy and co-operation of the *National* Church as well as of the seceders. Accordingly he went to Montauban,

where M. Adolphe Monod, M. de Felice, and M. Bonifas, professors of the Protestant College, and M. Marziaïs, President of the Consistory, gave him a cordial welcome. They examined his plan and highly approved of it Their recommendation was indispensable for dispelling the clouds of prejudice which his secession from the *National* Church raised against him, and which it has taken many a year altogether to dispel. Not less than 40,000 francs were required. To collect money he travelled through France and England. The result proved worth the trouble. The successful pilgrim returned to his home with just as much as he had prayed for before leaving.

This was in 1846. His congregation had just finished the building of their chapel when he reappeared amongst them. It was clear that no better site could be chosen for the new Establishment than the piece of ground which was connected with the chapel. It was a dry, healthy spot, surrounded by vineyards and pastures and cornfields, and close to the highway that led up to the village, from which it was only separated by a distance of a couple of hundred yards. The best plan, apparently, was to connect the Establishment with the chapel as one building. Thus the house of charity was sure to be a house of prayer. Heavily drained as his good people were by the building of their chapel, they yet yielded a surprising amount of help for the erecting of the new Establishment. Money they had not, but, being farmers, they had carts and horses, and draught-oxen; and though numbering only twenty-four families in all, those good people supplied not less than 8000 cartloads during a

period of two years; which, valued at their minimum, represented a contribution of 16,000 francs (£720). But these services might be estimated at more than double that sum, taking into account the trouble which they cost: for, as at daytime the farmers were occupied in their fields, they could only work for the Establishment during the night. They did not so much mind that fatigue as far as regarded their own persons, but their beasts, too, had to give up a considerable part of their rest. And to farmers like the Laforce husbandmen, who "regard the life of their beasts," such a sacrifice is not a small thing. Viewed in that light, each cartload at Laforce was, perhaps, worth more than many a bill of a hundred francs given at Paris, or than many a ten-pound note dropped in London.

Well might those excellent people have a good dinner after the work was finished in 1848. It was a happy day on which Mr. Bost, to solemnise the opening of the house, gave a festive repast to his friends—his *chers bouviers, i.e.*, his dear cartmen, as he used to call them. There were about a hundred guests; all Laforce was lost in wonder at such a colossal dinner-party. Among those guests were the good directress whom Mr. Bost had been so fortunate as to find, and the first three children who were intrusted to her care.

But Mr. Bost, like all good shepherds, was to experience that no lambs can be gathered where there is no danger of wolves. The local authorities, and especially some of the agents of the *Inspection Académique*, owed a grudge to Mr. Bost, to his ministerial work, and to his flock. This feeling was not improved when they saw



MR AND MRS BOST

the Establishment rise as a monument of the power of his principles, and as a rival institution threatening to put their Catholic schools in the shade. As usual, calumny was resorted to. The most absurd accusations were made against the heretical pastor and his friends. One moment everything seemed to be lost. There came an order from high quarters that the house must be shut up within a few days, but these "few days" were to Mr Bost days of fervent prayer and indefatigable activity. The *Préfet* of Dordogne was acquainted with the case. He went to the place in person to get thoroughly to the bottom of the matter. "Why," he said to Mr. Bost, after having inquired into everything, "the only fault of your Establishment is that it is not larger." Three months later the Establishment received *mention honourable* from the Minister of Instruction, and at the same time an order was issued for closing the free Catholic School. This was, on a small scale, the story of Haman and Mordecai.

The *Famille Evangélique*—this was the name which Mr. Bost gave to his Establishment—now grew up like a tree planted by the rivers of water. He had travelled many a mile to obtain francs and sovereigns. He did not need to travel to get pupils, they came from all directions; and soon there were fifty crowding the school-room by day and the dormitories by night. They were all girls. Mr. Bost thought that it was as well to commence with the weaker part of the human race. He was quite right there, for where a colony for both sexes is in prospect, it is desirable that the girls should be well managed first, before the boys come. Had the director

of Sainte Foy had it in his power to start his colony on that principle, perhaps he would not have been compelled to give up the training of girls.

Mr. Bost could rejoice in a full house, but that full house soon emptied his purse. The problem how to found a charity of this kind was successfully solved; but another problem, and a not less difficult one, was now to be grappled with,—how to support it. It was calculated that each child would cost at least 250 francs a year. Of course parties who sent children were required to pay for them; but most children were sent by friends or relatives, who were scarcely able to support themselves. It was found necessary to try to raise purses of 250, or half-purses of 125 francs, by voluntary subscriptions. The adoption of this scheme caused Mr. Bost many a journey every year through France and Great Britain. This part of his work must have been a painful burden to him. It is true he never returned home without having made some progress, but that progress was not so great as the demands of his Institution required. I find, for instance, that in 1854, when there were 75 children in the house, the number of the whole purses amounted to 54, and of the half ones to 22; but the next year they fell off to 41 and 14; and in 1858 there were only 30 whole and 13 half purses. This fluctuating state of income could not but cause a constant succession of deficits. In 1854 the books closed with a deficit of nearly 13,500 francs, in 1855 with 16,500, and in 1858 with nearly 13,000. Such difficulties must have been very trying.

One dark, cold, winter evening, Mr. Bost, on his way home, fell in with a poor beggar, who was in a most

wretched condition. The poor fellow held a wax image of the Virgin Mary in his hand, with which he begged his livelihood from door to door. Destitution and sickness, however, had at length so thoroughly exhausted his strength that he was now lying on the grass, scarce able to walk, and prepared to die from starvation. Mr. Bost helped him up, and succeeded in leading him to his parsonage, where he gave him supper and a bed. The next morning the poor man was no better, and quite unable to walk. On examination it was seen that he was suffering from an anchylosis of the hip, and that it would take some length of time before he would be able to move his limb. The history of poor Bartier—such was the man's name—was very sad. Even from a child of six he had been a beggar. Bodily weakness had prevented him from learning a trade. Homeless and friendless, he was cast into the world to wander about from place to place. He was often taken up by the police as a vagabond, and had spent a considerable portion of his life in prison. The cold, damp, prison-cell proved a poor abode for the weak, half-starved man. He became much worse, and contracted the anchylosis. Good nourishment would have brought him round, no doubt. But when released from prison he could do no work, owing to the defect in his limbs. Mr. Bost allowed him to rest till he should be able to walk better. And now happy days, such as he had never dreamed of before, dawned for poor Bartier. He proved a very intelligent man. He learnt with ease to read and to write. But his heart not less than his understanding proved susceptible of the good impressions which Mr. Bost tried to make upon him. The Gospel,

of Saint not only read of in a book, but also saw realised princi practice of that love of which he himself was the give came powerfully home to his heart. He threw the wax image, and embraced the living Saviour. hor can hardly picture to one's-self the joy which Mr. fost experienced at this surprising result of his charitable hospitality. But, cordially as he loved his guest, he could



Laforce.

not help feeling a little perplexed. What was he to do with the good man? Already Bartier had spent eighteen months at his house. He was still a weak creature. To bid him go would be to send him back to his misery. Yet Mr. Bost could not keep him for ever. He was a young man, and, though infirm, he might still live fifty years.

But Bartier himself soon perceived that matters could not go on in this way. The thought of being a burden

to his benefactor became more and more painful. One day Mr. Bost received a long letter. It came. Bartier, who was too bashful to speak to Mr. Bost the matter. He expressed his wish to become a teacher, requested Mr. Bost's aid and protection, and promised do his utmost to reward the trouble that would be taken for his instruction. Mr. Bost sent this letter to the *Ecole normale protestante* at Paris, and some time later Bartier was admitted to the training-school at Courbevoye. At the close of two years and a half he presented himself for examination to obtain his licence. There were sixty-five other aspirants to be examined along with him. He stood at the top of the list. One may imagine the joy of the good man, and the glad surprise with which his friends received him at Laforce. He was at once appointed teacher of the newly-built school. Soon after, he married one of the pupils of Mr. Bost's Establishment. To crown his bliss, he took into his house his old father, who ended his life in peace under the care of tender filial love.

Thirteen years have elapsed since Bartier took charge of the school, and he is still the highly-respected teacher of the Protestant boys of Laforce.

II.

The Idiot—Foundation of Bethesda—The Incurable Boy—Foundation of Siloé—The unhappy Father and his epileptic Son—Foundation of two new Establishments

MEANWHILE the *Famille Evangélique* increased so much that an enlargement of the house was urgently required. It was so connected with the chapel, that on its right side it formed a right angle. Another building similar to, and parallel with, the chapel was raised on the left side of the house, and thus the house obtained its present regular and symmetrical form. The funds for defraying this considerable expenditure were again collected in France and England. It is a two-storied square building, which, besides the chapel, contains a spacious sewing-room, a school-room, a dining-room, dwelling-rooms for the directress, etc., and excellent dormitories on the first floor. It is separated from the public road by a large garden, and at its rear there is a large yard enclosed by several adjacent buildings,—a bakery, a wash-house, a bath-room, a butchery, a stable, etc.

All this cost nearly 80,000 francs (£3200). One would think that this was quite enough for a single man to have to care for. And so thought Mr. Bost. But charity and calculation are often bad companions. Charity told Mr. Bost that all this was not half enough. Every month, nay, every week, children were sent to him; the sight of which touched the most tender chords of compassion in his heart. These nevertheless he could not receive, not only from want of space, but also from the peculiarity of

their condition. Some were suffering from severe chronic diseases which defied all medical treatment. Some laboured under bodily defects which were declared incurable. Some also were idiots, and some were insane. What was he to do? Take them into the house? That would be injurious to the other children. Send them back? Where were the poor creatures to go? There was no Establishment in France that could receive them. And was he, then, to send away the very children which required more help than any other in the world? Indeed, it was a very serious question. But calculation continually chimed in its stubborn observation that there were only 100 centimes in a franc. And charity could make no reply.

But an event happened which put a decisive weight in the scale in favour of charity. It was in 1854. A girl, who was a perfect idiot, stood one day in Mr. Bost's lobby. The aspect of the hideous-looking little creature was so sickening, that Mr. Bost could not possibly permit her to be taken into the Establishment; but still less could he send her away. If ever there was a subject for compassionate, saving love, it was here. The power of prayer and the perseverance of charity could now be put to the test. Mr. Bost resolved to keep the girl in his own house. The doctors declared it perfect folly. He had better try to train a monkey or a dog. He suggested the establishment of an Asylum for such creatures, but his proposal was listened to as if it was for a drawing-school for blind people. So he was left alone with the miserable girl. With that pertinacious decisiveness which is one of the prominent features in his character, he set about

trying to strike a few sparks of intellect out of this hard flint. During three months he felt as if dealing with a brute of the lowest species. All his efforts, unwearied and varied as they were, proved a total failure. Still he continued praying and labouring, hoping against hope. One evening at worship, while the hymn was being sung, he heard an articulate and harmonious tone proceed from the brutishly-shaped mouth. The child evidently tried to put its voice in accord with the sounds which it was hearing. This was a gladdening ray of light. Now, Mr. Bost is a musician, and an excellent performer on the piano. On discovering that the mind of the child could be best approached through the medium of music, he at once applied his talent to the benefit of his unhappy pupil. Under the softening and cheering influence of sound, it was most affecting to see how gradually, first with painful struggles, then with growing ease, the mind of the child emerged from the dark deep in which it had been confined. By little and little the idiot succeeded in uttering articulate sounds, then in uniting them into syllables, and finally into words. At the same time her health improved visibly, her nervous system became less irritable, her face assumed more and more a rational expression. She began to show joy and surprise when receiving something that was agreeable to her. Then tokens of gratitude and affection followed. In short, after a lapse of two years the idiot had disappeared, to make room for a child which appeared to be behind by a few years only, when compared with other children of her age. At the present moment that same child, formerly beneath the level of the brute, speaks well, sews and knits like sane children

of her age, and might be the teacher of those whose intellect is not sunk to such a low pitch as hers was when she first put her foot on Mr. Bost's threshold.

This marvellous result was a perfect victory over the obstinacy of the doctors. It was at the same time an answer to the question, whether or not an Asylum should be built. While looking out for the required funds, Mr. Bost took idiot and incurable girls into his parsonage. Among the latter there were some peculiar specimens of human diseases. There was one who suffered from the serious and rare disease of hydropsy of the spine (*Spina bifida*). Then, as the number of applicants increased, he desired to hire a small house. There was one only a few yards from the *Famille Evangélique* connected with a vineyard, pastures, arable land, and a farm-yard. No property could be more desirable as a habitation for children whose chief solace was fresh air, and a continuous conversation with the flowers of the fields and the birds of heaven. But the magistrate of the place was a declared adversary of Mr. Bost. He would often publicly aver that Mr. Bost's efforts only served to render his position more and more disagreeable. And yet—such are the wonderful ways of Providence—it was the magistrate himself who enabled Mr. Bost to get possession of the house. Mr. Bost's enemy left the community, and his successor (who was owner of the property) offered it to Mr. Bost for the use of his idiots and incurables.

This was a considerable step towards the realisation of Mr. Bost's wishes. But one great barrier was still to be removed. Between 40,000 and 50,000 francs (£1600 to £2000) were asked for the place. Mr. Bost again

took his staff and travelled through France and Great Britain, knocking at the doors of his Christian friends. He was responded to most liberally. In England and Scotland he collected 20,185 francs (£807); in France, 19.691 francs (£788); from Switzerland, Bremen, and Holland, he obtained 955 francs. So he returned home with 40,876 francs, or £1633. But the house had to be altogether rebuilt. It is a simple, well-arranged, and cheerful-looking Establishment. Its name is Bethesda. Mr. Bost entered it in 1855 with five children. The day on which it was solemnly opened was a real festival for the good people of Laforce.

No sooner was it known that there was an establishment for imbecile and incurable girls at Laforce, than Mr. Bost received numerous requests to admit boys also. He answered that he could not think of it. But that answer did not discourage the friends of the unfortunate boys from trying to persuade him by continuous applications. "What?" a poor crippled boy said, to whom admission to the Establishment was refused, "is Mr. Bost of opinion that a boy does not deserve as much compassion as a girl?" Now, that was certainly not Mr. Bost's opinion, but he found that it was not always possible to give to everybody what he deserves. "But could you not appropriate one of the rooms of Bethesda for boys?" some friends would ask. "No, I cannot," was the short answer; and at length he gave no answer at all. The numerous applications, advices, and suggestions so perfectly bewildered him, that he felt he must barricade himself behind a profound silence, if he was not to be lifted out of his place. But although this



LAFORCE.—BETHESDA

silence guarded him from further attacks from without, it could not protect him against attacks from within. The matter weighed heavily on his heart. It pressed on him all day like a burden; it went to bed with him in the evening, it disturbed his sleep during the night, and it rose with him in the morning. "As in Christ," he heard an inward voice whisper, "there is neither male nor female, so is it in misery." True; but another voice, less tender but more clamorous, cried, "Where is the money to come from?"

One day he was on business at a neighbouring populous town. A poor boy attracted his attention. The aspect of the miserable creature was heartrending. His head was incessantly shaking to and fro in convulsive jerks like the balance of a clock-work; his left arm and left leg were lame, and his right eye was blind. Crowds often assembled round him, showing their curiosity more than their compassion. "This is a Protestant boy," a friend said to Mr. Bost. "It is urgently desired that he should be removed from the inspection of the public, but where is he to be sent? His parents are poor. He lives with his aunt, as his stepmother hates him and treats him cruelly. His aunt is also poor, and it is likely his father will take him back to use him for begging." A few days later Mr. Bost received a letter from the Protestant clergyman of the place requesting him to take the boy.

Mr. Bost could resist no longer. "Send the boy to me," he wrote; and from this moment his mind was made up to found Siloé, the third Establishment. He followed the same course which he had taken with the girls. He took the boy into his own house. Soon there were five.

It must have been a touching sight to witness Mr. Bost in the midst of this pitiful family. It was a literal realisation of that precept of Christ, "If thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maim, the lame, and the blind."

He felt that a house must be got for them. Two little dwellings, situated a quarter of a mile from the parsonage, were for sale. Though they were little more than a heap of rubbish, 5000 francs were asked for them. But the situation was all that could be desired; a splendid garden, with a spring of the purest water at its edge. Much, however, had to be done to make them habitable. Windows had to be cut, and doors and chimneys built, and flooring laid down. Instead of ladders which led up to the first floor, staircases had to be constructed. "These houses very much resemble your poor boys," some friends said. Still they did pretty well for a commencement, and in September, 1858, Mr. and Mrs. Deymier, whom Mr. Bost engaged for the direction of the Establishment, took their places at the head of the family.

Before two years elapsed Siloé contained fourteen boys, idiots and incurables. Great was the satisfaction with which Mr. Bost bestowed his care upon this Establishment, but great, too, was the ingratitude which he experienced from many parents. Some took their imbecile boys away because they did not turn sagacious within twelve months, and some took their crippled boys away because they had not learnt to walk. Then, finding that they could not make them walk either, they would humbly beg for their re-admission. But Mr. Bost was not such a fool as to allow the holy cause of charity thus to

be trifled with. The request was declined, and the open places were filled up with children of parents who could better appreciate the blessings of such an Institution. Besides these bitter experiences, he had also to bear the burden of financial straits. The books of Siloé showed on the 1st of April, 1860—*i. e.*, in the second year of its existence—a deficit of nearly 18,000 francs (£720), not to speak of the deficits of the two other Establishments. which were also considerable.

But the building of establishments had not yet come to an end. Siloé soon proved too strait. And there was another inconvenience connected with it, which threatened serious consequences. The grounds of Siloé bordered upon those of Bethesda. The garden of Siloé, not being spacious enough to afford sufficient opportunity of employment for the increasing number of boys, the garden of Bethesda was resorted to. But this arrangement brought the boys too much into contact with the girls. Prudence commanded the removal of the boys to some more distant spot, and to some larger building.

Many instances might be cited of the numerous requests which came in from all quarters, even from a country so far away as Russia. The replies of Laforce were like those of the Vatican: *Non possumus;* but it was soon proved that they proceeded from a less stubborn spirit. The postman one day brought a letter which at length snapped the cords of Mr. Bost's resistance:—

"It is in the name of the *Chambre de Charité* of N—— that I take the liberty of inquiring whether you would consent to admit to your Establishments an unfortunate boy, with whom we do not know what to do; since in

him there are so many miseries and infirmities combined, that not one of the public Establishments to which we have applied will consent to take charge of him. Arthur P—— is a boy of ten. Owing to disease he has totally lost his hearing. One of his eyes is also completely lost; and he has only a partial use of the other, since little spots dim the sight. Moreover, he is subject to nervous epileptic fits, and sometimes to maniacal violence. His speech begins to become more and more unintelligible, etc."

So Mr. Bost resolved to build a new establishment. At two miles west from Laforce, in the valley of the Dordogne, there is an extensive tract of ground, through which a rivulet pours its pure and fertilising waters. There two houses, a large and a small one, were founded, separated from each other by a yard, into which an iron gate gives access from the public road. A spacious kitchen garden was laid out, and fruit-trees were planted. The family of Siloé was then transplanted to the larger house, which then received that name; while the house which before was called Siloé received the name of Ebenezer. The smaller house was called Bethel, and appropriated for the reception of epileptic boys; whereas, Ebenezer, now left by the boys, was destined for epileptic girls.

What had especially retarded Mr. Bost in the founding of a new establishment was the difficulty of finding a fit person as director. Mr. and Mrs. Deymier did not continue long, and Siloé had during the last three years been without a director. One day, however, being at a bathing-place, Mr. Bost made the acquaintance of the Rev. Mr. Castel, a retired minister, and his excellent wife. The

happy couple, still in the prime of life, showed a desire to find some situation which might enable them to be useful in the vineyard of their heavenly Master. Their independent position, as well as their sympathy with the lost and the miserable, rendered them exactly the people who were wanted for such Establishments as Siloé and Bethel. They as gladly accepted Mr. Bost's proposal as he made it; and in the summer of 1864 Mr. and Mrs. Castel entered Siloé and Bethel in their capacities of director and directress of these interesting Establishments.

It may readily be imagined that by these proceedings the debt which already was pressing upon Mr. Bost was greatly increased. Indeed, as early as March, 1864, the books showed a deficit of 38,000 francs (£1520). And yet four months later he could write, "We have no debts. Since the foundation of our Establishments this is the first time we have been able to proclaim such good news. We uttered a cry of distress. It was heard, and within six months our debt was paid. Both the rich and the poor were moved when they learned what we suffered. They found fault with themselves for having forgotten our Asylums in the distribution of their charity. People who knew nothing of our work hitherto, have promised us their help for the future. We depend upon it. Our friends at Geneva have twice over sent us considerable gifts," etc.

Indeed, nothing can be more delightful than thus to see a good man, whose only fault is that his faith is greater than his calculating power, and whose heart is richer than his purse, helped out of his difficulties by the united efforts of friends of all classes, who, far from rebuking him, on the contrary rebuke themselves for having

allowed him to struggle alone in carrying on a work than which no other work deserves more the name of charity; and no charity deserves more the title of a labour of love.

III

A Visit to the Establishments of Laforce.

I HAD intended to visit Laforce in the summer of 1864, but unlooked-for circumstances compelled me to delay doing so till December of that year. Winter is a bad season for visiting charities. Not only are the days short, so that comparatively little can be seen between dawn and dusk, but the gardens are also withered, and the fields are covered with snow, and the Establishments look dull and dreary in the midst of the desolation. You are told how the inmates exercise themselves in summer by digging the soil or reaping the corn; and how the children enjoy themselves in the garden or in the orchard—but you see nothing of this, for young and old take to the workshops or the schools, longing for the day when the cuckoo will again be heard in the wood and the cattle rove through the meadows.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon when the stage-coach jolted over the large stones that pave the main thoroughfare of Bergerac, the nearest town to Laforce. I was advised to take that route, as I would be most likely to find a conveyance from thence to Mr.

Bost's Establishments. The town, which numbers a population of 8000, is more famous for the choice white wine which bears its name than for the beauty of its streets. It is one of the worst built places on the right bank of the Dordogne. I cannot tell how it looks in summer, but I found so many pools in its streets, that I thought even the longest and warmest summer would hardly suffice to dry them all up. The country round, however, which is slightly undulating, presents a charming rural aspect. Beeches, elms, and firs skirt the meadows, corn-fields, and vineyards, which extend in variegated succession through the valley of the Dordogne.

The landlord of the chief inn told me that Mr. Bost, who always calls at his house when in town, was absent in Paris. This was sad intelligence, to which his information that there was no means of getting to Laforce till five the next morning, added little consolation. The distance was only three or four miles, but it was dark; and what was the use of taking a private conveyance in such circumstances? Mr. Bost's absence would prevent me from seeing him, and the sun's absence would prevent me from seeing his Establishments.

"Moreover," the talkative landlord said, "there is no inn at Laforce where you can put up. You had better stay here. I will give you a good dinner and a first-rate bed, and to-morrow morning at five you will be able to proceed comfortably with the post-chaise."

The prospect of a "first-rate bed" after a long day's journey all the way from Tours was enticing enough, but I was afraid the better the bed the more difficult it would

be for me to get up at four the next morning, to take my seat in a post-chaise.

"Is it a covered coach?" I asked, not without reason.

"Well," the answer was, "I think it is. I don't know, I am sure. But—yes—of course it is covered. It is winter, you see. *Sans doute, Monsieur, sans doute, la voiture est couverte.*"

The bed was really first-rate, and in it I soon forgot all my petty troubles and trials of the day. I cannot exactly tell what I had been dreaming about, but I awoke with the feeling that I was out in a storm of thunder and lightning. The thunder proved to be the stentorian voice of a stout broad-shouldered ostler who was standing at my bedside, and the lightning the glow of the candle which he was holding between his thumb and finger.

"Get up, sir," he said with a voice which seemed to issue from the bowels of the earth. "It is four o'clock."

"Very well," I answered, "put down the candle and fetch my boots."

"Here are your boots. I haven't got a candlestick, but dress and I will light you."

"So *you* are my candlestick," I observed; "very convenient indeed."

He was very patient, and looked with an air of *bonhommie* at my struggle to pass the Rubicon that separated the world of dreams from the world of Bergerac.

"This way," the walking candlestick said, leading me down a narrow staircase. He opened a door, blew out the candle, and we found ourselves in the street.

"Where is the coach?" I asked, trying in vain to discover anything of the kind in the dark shades of the night.

"I am the driver," he said, "my chaise is ten minutes' walk from this.

His calculation was not overstated. We really walked through the whole of the town till we reached a narrow lane. It was blocked up by an open two-wheeled post-gig, beside which an old man was standing, lantern in hand. I looked round in despair.

"Is this the conveyance?" I asked, in a voice of alarm.

"Of course it is," Mr. Stentor replied, and in the narrow lane his words echoed like a peal of thunder.

I heartily wished myself back in my bed again, but no alternative was left but to turn the necessity into a virtue. The stars were glittering brightly. I climbed to my seat, wrapped myself in my rug, and off we trotted at a speed of four miles an hour.

I tried to keep up a conversation with the driver, but found it difficult, as he had to give nearly all his attention to the road, which at many spots was all but impassable. He was a Protestant, so I could speak more freely with him.

"Of course you know Mr. Bost and his Establishments?" I said.

"Don't I!" he answered. "And who doesn't in ten, twenty *kilomètres* round about!"

He told me that he had known Laforce before Mr. Bost came there, and that he was able to make a comparison between what it was in those days and what it is now. "You can have no conception," he said, "of the great

change which Mr. Bost has brought about. There were no roads which a man could pass along without risking his neck: now you will find good thoroughfares. Laforce is still a small out-of-the-way hamlet; but besides Mr. Bost's Establishments, which are fine buildings, you will see many a respectable house where formerly there were only miserable sheds scarcely fit for human beings. Monsieur Bost supports 200 children in his Establishments. You may perceive what an effect that must have upon the prosperity of the place. *Ah, c'est un bon homme. Monsieur Bost—un très bon homme.*"

In this manner my coachman chatted away, showing that I had started a topic upon which he loved to dwell. I tried to give a more spiritual turn to the conversation by asking about the religious condition of the place; but here I found that the poor man was out of his element, and that, though a Protestant, he did not possess a much greater knowledge of the Gospel than I had seen among his Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen.

We reached a spot where the road became on a sudden so steep that I thought we were at the bottom of a high wall.

"We must go out here," the driver said, jumping down. "This is a very bad place. The poor animal can hardly pull up."

Of course I alighted, not observing the muddy pool in which I had to stand, for all the water of the hill seemed to be collected in this spot. The coachman took the horse by the reins, and while he pulled the gig in front, I took my stand behind and pushed to the best of my ability. This was an instance of the "world turned

upside down,"—the passenger bearing the conveyance instead of the conveyance the passenger. "The next time," I thought, "the coachman will take out the horse and put me in."

At the top of the hill we resumed our seats, and soon found ourselves at the entrance of the village. There was no living creature to be seen, nor was there anything like a lamp-post. The only light visible came from a house, at the door of which we stopped.

"This is the inn," my friend said.

I paid my fare—only one franc—and opened the glass door of the tavern. I found myself in a butcher's shop. Joints and shoulders of mutton were suspended from the ceiling. A little man of middle age, dressed in a shirt and trousers, with naked arms, was cutting meat at a table that ran along the wall to the right. To the left there was a broad hearth with an outstanding chimney. A kettle was merrily humming over the wood fire. I looked at my watch. It was six o'clock.

"Is this an inn?" I asked.

"*Oui, Monsieur,*" the butcher said, cutting away, and leaving me to my own reflections.

"Can you give me breakfast?"

"*Oui, Monsieur.*" He took a pole, to the end of which an iron hook was fastened, and taking down from the ceiling a large joint, which seemed to be a little too heavy for his balancing power, staggered away with it like a drunken man. Soon he made his appearance again.

"When will you give me my breakfast?" I said.

"We cannot give it you before eight," he answered,

taking down another joint, with which he again disappeared. A few minutes elapsed, and he came again.

"Why can't you give it me now?" I asked.

"Because we have no milk yet," was the answer, and away he staggered with the third joint.

As it seemed that between each question which I put to him a joint had to be carried away, and as I found that the removal of each joint took four minutes, I counted the joints which were still hanging; and as there were thirteen, I calculated that our conversation would in this way take nearly an hour. With this prospect before me, I thought I was justified in taking a seat near the fireside.

No sooner was I seated, than the landlady made her appearance—a tall, slender, middle-aged woman, with a fair complexion. She was followed by a servant, who carried a pot, which she placed on the iron hearth-plate at my feet. By means of the tongs she raked a few pieces of burning wood under the pot, and thus gave me the benefit of two fires at once. In five minutes, however, she came with a second pot, and soon I saw a third fire blaze up. A third pot thereupon made its appearance, and a fourth; till in the course of half an hour there were a dozen pots, each provided with its own little fire, arranged round the main fire. Each time a pot was added, I pushed my chair some inches backward, until I found myself seated in the middle of the parlour, having twelve boiling pots on my right side, as many heaps of cut meat on my left, and as many joints over my head.

"Is all that destined for my breakfast?" I asked.

"Oh dear no," the landlady answered. "To-day is

market-day, and we'll have the country people to dinner."

Then the landlady put both her hands to her mouth to form a sort of trumpet, and, giving free play to her lungs, called the name of "Jeannette" with such a shrill, piercing sound, that I wondered the joints did not tumble down from the ceiling. Soon Jeannette made her appearance, two butcher's axes in her hands, one of which she gave to her fellow-servant. They placed themselves at a block behind my back, and began mincing meat. The noise of the strokes, wonderfully regular and rapid as they were, put all attempts at conversation out of the question. At the same time a fine little boy of six jumped in, to show his mother a rattle which he had received on the occasion of the market-day. As the parlour was nearly full, the little fellow took his stand at my knees, and there began to turn his rattle with might and main. This musical performance, though perfectly in keeping with the noise of the mincing, was yet a little too much for my tympanum; so, as the daylight was breaking, I opened the door and took a walk through the village.

Having proceeded a few steps, I noticed a sort of coach-office, the door of which was open. I thought I might just inquire whether a conveyance could be got to take me back to Bergerac in the afternoon. To my surprise I saw my landlord and driver busily engaged in cleaning a gig. He told me that he was the only carriage-proprietor of the place, and that he could er's me no conveyance, as the market-day required e itself servants. ork well.

I walked on a quarter of a mile, but th nd, and took

weather soon drove me back. Having returned to the neighbourhood of the inn, I saw a baker's shop, and as I was really in want of some food, and did not know when my breakfast would be served up, I entered to buy a roll. Whom should I see but my landlord again, standing behind the counter and weighing large loaves on wooden scales!

"So you are also the baker of the place?" I said.

"*Oui, Monsieur.*"

"Dear me," I answered, "you must be a clever fellow;" and calculating his professions on my fingers, I said, "you are the coachman, the innkeeper, the butcher, and the baker. Now I want to be shaved—are you also the barber?"

"*Non, Monsieur,*" he answered, shaking his head with an expression of resentment, as if I had asked him whether he was the executioner. Still, his indignation did not go so far as to make him unwilling to call the required individual.

The breakfast which my landlady served up, though not very substantial, was still a real refreshment in my then circumstances. I now came to understand why everything was put off till the milk came; for a large basin of it, hot from the cow, formed the chief part of this simple rural repast.

But a truce to these gossiping reminiscences, by the

The reader will have gathered from the preceding chapters that there are five Establishments at Laforce. They are as follow:—

1. *La Famille Evangélique*, which receives—
    a. Orphan girls of every age.
    b. Young girls who are in circumstances which expose them to dangers of various kinds.
    c. Young girls of scattered Protestant families.
2. *Bethesda*, which receives young girls who are—
    a. Infirm or incurable; or
    b. Blind, or threatened with blindness; or
    c. Idiots; or
    d. Lunatic, or deranged in mind.
3. *Ebenezer*, which receives epileptic girls.
4. *Siloé*, which receives orphan or poor boys, who at the same time are—
    a. Infirm or incurable; or
    b. Blind, or threatened with blindness; or
    c. Idiots.
5. *Bethel*, which receives epileptic boys.

Mr. Schneider, whom Mr. Bost had recently engaged as his secretary and assistant in the superintendence of this extensive work, was so kind as to guide me through all the five houses. We began with the inspection of the three girls' houses, which are situated only a few yards from each other. What struck me at the outset was the cheerful and bright appearance of the buildings. In point of architecture, they presented nothing that attracted attention; neither were the gardens which separated them from the public road in any way remarkable. But the inside of the houses showed that the builder had spared nothing to promote the health and cheerfulness of the

denizens by an abundant supply of air and light, both in the sitting-rooms and bedrooms. The schoolrooms alone appeared to me to be a little too low in the ceilings and wanting in light. But this is a defect which is common to many schools, especially those connected with establishments.

Two ladies conduct the direction of the *Famille Evangélique;* the one the household and the other the school department. I found no servants in the house, all the work being done by the girls themselves. There were seventy-five, some of whom I found engaged in the sewing-room; while others were in the adjacent schoolroom. In both places the girls receive such instruction as will make them good servants and seamstresses. The hours from nine to twelve and from one to five, are devoted to teaching; from twelve to one and from six to seven, to playing. What I could notice of the school-teaching, which was imparted by the directress and an assistant lady, appeared to be just what is wanted for girls of that class. At my request various hymns and songs were sung by the united pupils of both rooms. Their performance showed an amount of taste and refinement which girls like these, some of whom looked very coarse and uncouth, could never have acquired at their homes. And no wonder; for Mr. Bost, who is himself a good singer, and a composer, is very particular about this part of the instruction, from which he, in my opinion, rightly [illegible] much aid in the cultivation of the mind and the [illegible] of the habits. Nor is he less careful about the [illegible] and biblical instruction, to which an hour is de-

The family rises at six, and has worship at half an hour after. The hour from seven to eight is given to sewing or knitting for the household. The breakfast, which is at eight, consists of bread and broth, or milk; the lunch, which is at twelve, consists of a piece of bread; the dinner, which is at five, is composed of potatoes and vegetables, and three times a week the girls have meat. There is plenty of opportunity for bodily exercise, since, as I have said already, all the work, the cooking of the meals, the cleaning of the house with its numerous rooms and adjacent buildings, and the cultivation of the garden, is done by the girls themselves. The girls are also taught to make purchases for the Establishment at the market and the shops. They go out two and two, under the direction of an adult person, or of an elder fellow-pupil, who is able to show them what they have to attend to, and how to get the best articles at the lowest prices. Besides, the afternoon of every Thursday is set apart for walking. The wholesome effect of this system of training is noticeable in the fresh, buoyant look of the girls. It cannot be doubted that they must thus get thoroughly initiated into everything that belongs to the department of a servant or housekeeper. The Establishment has also its own stock of cattle, a bakery, and a butchery, which are placed under the management of a man, who is also the gardener of the house. And such girls as are destined for service in the country have an opportunity of becoming acquainted with what a farmer's servant is supposed to be familiar with. The house itself is a proof that the girls learn to do their work well. Though my visit was not announced beforehand, and took

place early in the forenoon, yet I was requested to go through the whole of the house, from the cellar and basement up to the bedrooms; and I found everything in the most perfect order. I never witnessed more untidiness in human dwellings than in the country-places of Southern France; but the Establishments of Laforce were as clean and neat as the houses of Holland. The two bedrooms, one with forty, and the other with twenty-four beds, as well as the infirmary with eight beds, left nothing to be wished for in this respect. The dress of the girls, too, is clean and becoming. It is as simple as possible. A white cap or a kerchief covers the head; a black pelerine the chest; a gown of cotton the rest of the body. If there is anything reminding one of a uniform, it is merely accidental.

I could not obtain any statistics as to the results of this work; but I was glad to learn that, as far as could be ascertained, those girls who have turned out badly form by far the minority; and that of these even many, after having gone astray for a while, returned to the right way. It must be understood, however, that many of the girls trained at the *Famille Evangélique* are children of evangelists and colporteurs, and consequently enjoyed a religious education from their childhood. The *Famille Evangélique* is not a penitentiary, nor a Magdalene institution. It is true there are girls among the pupils who but for their being sent to this house would have been sure to fall into a disorderly life; but they constitute the minority. On the whole, the children of the *Famille Evangélique* belong to a poor but respectable class. For many the reception into the house was necessary, more

to guard them against the errors of Popery than against the dangers of seduction. Though the object of their education is to make good servants of them, yet to some, who show a talent for a better position in life, a higher training is given. Thus some are enabled to pass their examination as teachers of popular and of ladies' schools. Some are at present engaged as nursery-maids, *bonnes*, or governesses in England and Scotland. The two first directresses of Bethesda were pupils of the *Famille Evangélique;* and so were the linen-maid and the cook of the same Establishment. Many pupils have turned out faithful Christian servants, or pious, godly mothers. Mr. Bost has often been encouraged in his arduous but important task, by striking proofs of the heart-renewing effect of God's Word upon these girls. The few Reports which I could lay hold of contain accounts of death-beds, which give certainty that among those who sing the song of the Lamb in the heavenly Jerusalem there are many pupils of the *Famille Evangélique.*

From the *Famille Evangélique* we proceeded to *Bethesda.* I found this house almost crowded with girls whose aspect excited feelings of the deepest compassion. There were fifty-eight, of various ages, from five or six to twenty or twenty-five years. Twenty-five of them were idiots; the rest were suffering from complaints which were deemed incurable. Hopes, however, were entertained that some would be restored to health. I found the directress engaged in the affecting task of trying to keep a sort of school among these imbecile creatures. The hours from nine till twelve and from two till five, are set apart for this work; but in summer the greater portion

of the day is devoted to garden-labour and exercise in the open air. In another room a teacher instructed half-a-dozen idiots in sewing; and in a third room I found about a dozen girls, some of whom were incurables, grouped round a harmonium, on which a teacher was playing a tune which they were trying to sing. The music was, of course, very deficient; but still it was touching to notice how these poor girls attempted to produce something like the melody which was being played. In each of the rooms the same touching sight presented itself, viz., the continuous and sometimes apparently hopeless struggle of patient charity to untwist the strings of imbecility with which the minds of those poor creatures were tied down. I do not believe that there is a place in the world where the patience and perseverance of love is put to a stronger test than in a school of idiots. It even requires a considerable amount of patience to teach an ordinary child the letters of the alphabet in a week or a fortnight; but what must that be which is needed to teach a child who can hardly master a single letter in two months! Only fancy yourself sitting down beside a child with no other object during a whole hour than to make it pronounce and write an *o!* and, when you have got through that hour, you find that the figure the child scribbles down resembles as much an *o* as a pair of tongs resembles an egg. Or imagine yourself engaged for another hour in trying to teach a girl of ten or twelve years to shift a little piece of wood from the left to the right side of another piece, and at the close of the hour, during which you have corrected her a couple of hundred times, you find that she fancies she is doing

exactly what you want her to do by laying one piece across the other! Indeed, such work would, in the long run, make you an idiot also, if love did not continually refresh your consciousness of being engaged in a most useful labour.

Till recently, the incurables who inhabit this house with the idiots were employed in instructing the latter. I was glad to find that Mr. Bost had done away with this method of teaching, which could not be other than unfavourable to the education of both pupils and teachers. The idiots are now separated from the incurables in the hours of teaching and during the night. The bedrooms, which are upstairs, are comparatively small, it being found injudicious to have more than four or six of these unfortunate creatures in one room. I counted nine such bedrooms, besides an infirmary containing fifteen beds. In another room I found a blind girl engaged in teaching two other blind girls to read by the touch, and to write after the system of *Kilian de St. Hippolyte.* She showed me three big books which she had written, containing the Psalms and the Epistles, Paul.

Ebenezer, the third building, contained twelve girls, seven of whom were epileptic and five insane. I found them engaged in sewing. Of course there could be no such thing as a school for those unfortunate girls. They were simply kept busy during the day with a little sewing, walking, and playing, the teacher having to be constantly on the alert, as every moment a fit of epilepsy, or an outburst of insanity, might take place. The insane ones, generally, are of a quiet, mild character, except at

odd times, when some one or other may turn a little unmanageable. In that case no confinement is resorted to, the strait jacket being found to do all that is required. I found but one dormitory for the whole of the inmates.

After half an hour's walk we arrived at the establishments called *Siloé* and *Bethel.* The Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Castel received us with kind, cordial hospitality. They appeared very happy in their office, which they had entered on recently. We took a seat at their fireside in the large, cheerful sitting-room, which is at the same time the dwelling-room of the whole household. We afterwards walked through the Establishments, which, being recently built, were in such a style as Mr. Bost's experience at Bethesda and Ebenezer had taught him would best answer the purpose. *Siloé,* the larger of the two, contained twenty-nine boys, of whom fourteen were idiots and fifteen incurables. Among the latter two were blind and one suffered in a frightful degree from St. Vitus's dance. *Bethel,* the smaller house, which is ldestined for epileptics, was still unoccupied, as the besiuber of patients was not yet large enough to make than tch while to set up a special household. There you have who, for the time being, were lodged at Siloé. the child sc.of Siloé are lofty and well lighted. The pair of tongs contains a school-room, a dining-room, a engaged for anotwith eight beds, and two smaller bed- or twelve years to he same number of bedrooms on the left to the right side of Mialhe's study, an infirmary, and the hour, during which stants and servants are also to be of hundred times, you find first floor may also be got by

an outside staircase, which leads up to a large balcony, sheltered by an awning, under which invalids may sit to take fresh air, and to enjoy the aspect of the country round about. The smaller bedrooms are destined for such patients as, from the peculiar nature of their disease or character, require to be separated from the rest. At this time one of the smaller bedrooms on the ground floor was occupied by a young man, whose happy, quiet, jovial look amused me, despite the sadness of his case. The poor fellow fancied himself king of the world. As it did not become such royalty to sleep with the common people in one dormitory, he was determined on having a bedroom for himself; and so the smaller one was given to him. It would have been injudicious, however, to permit him to be alone during the night, but fortunately he allows another young man, who is not insane, to sleep in the same bedroom, under the title of "his majesty's adjutant."

Siloé is destined to be an agricultural colony, under the management of Mr. Mialhe. Those of the invalids whose infirmities do not prevent them from doing some work, will here find an opportunity for wholesome and useful labour. Those who are compelled to stay at home, will be kept busy with a little handiwork, such as knitting, matting chairs, making mats, etc.

IV.

A Glance at the Spirit and Method of Treatment of the Incurables and Idiots

It is not my intention here to enter into a detailed account of the way in which Mr. Bost treats idiocy, epilepsy, and diseases called incurable. So far as I can judge, it appears to me that the principles which he lays down in his Reports are recommended by common sense. His main principle, upon which all the others rest, is expressed in the well-known proverb, "The best physician under God is Nature." In his Report of 1860, Mr. Bost says upon this subject, "I never visit the hospitals in our great cities without a feeling of distress. What then, you ask, is wanted in those large establishments? Are the patients not cared for? Are there no able medical men, no remedies, no order, no cleanliness, no wholesome and abundant nourishment? No doubt there is plenty of all that. I have with admiration accompanied the medical men on their morning visits. Everything *art* could contrive for restoration to health was applied, yet the cure was slow, attended with horrible pains, and often terminated in death. I will tell you what was wanting: the country air, the fragrance of the flowers and of the earth, the morning dew, which is more refreshing than many baths taken in town or even in rivers. What is wanting is the beneficial rays of the sun, the harmony of nature, the carol and warbling of birds, so adapted to cheer those hearts which are broken by suffering, and to whom no other recreation is offered but the sight of rows of beds

upon which sufferers are sighing and groaning from morning till evening, and from evening till morning."

Indeed, it is amazing to read the almost miraculous cures which, simply by the application of this principle, have been effected at the Establishments of Laforce Consumption of the lungs, already in an advanced stage, has quite disappeared from some,* hysteria from others,† an amputation was prevented in one case,‡ and a girl, who suffered from a disease of the hip and was sent away from the hospital as incurable, was enabled to walk well,§ etc

With regard to idiocy and lunacy, this principle is now generally acknowledged to be the only true one It seems that Mr. Bost learnt to value its application on a visit to Scotland "I visited a lunatic asylum in that country," he writes || "Upon entering the yard I saw three large omnibuses, capable of containing ten persons inside and ten out I gave my letter of introduction to the director, who, with a smile, replied, 'I will attend to you directly, but I must first see my pupils off' These omnibuses were filled with insane males and females, some carried provisions for the journey, some had books, some drawing albums, and some lead pencils 'Now you must draw the large oak,' the director said to some, and 'you the church,' etc" This scene produced a deep impression upon Mr Bost, and confirmed him greatly in the principle of rural training which he had adopted.

From my personal acquaintance with Mr. Bost, and my conversation with several of his assistants, I believe I

* Report, 1860, p 38
† Ibid, p 39
‡ Ibid., 1864, p 28
§ Ibid
|| Ibid, 1864, p 45

am safe in saying that, if one wish to witness the right administration of the Gospel as a healing power both for body and soul, he can do no better than spend a week at Laforce. The method which Mr. Bost applies is very simple. He tries to restore peace and joy to the minds of his patients by constantly telling them the good news that there is a Saviour who cordially loves them; who thoroughly understands their sufferings, because He Himself suffered even more than they; who, in order to rescue them from all sufferings, and to restore them to perfect everlasting happiness, came down from Heaven to do all that was required for their redemption. Hearts broken under the strokes of suffering and misery are, with few exceptions, prepared to receive and to believe such gladdening intelligence. The calmness which this belief imparts to the mind cannot but operate most beneficially upon the body. Prayerful submission takes the place of rebellious resentment. And if the cheerful state of mind which enlivens the patients cannot always remove the complaints that vex them, it at any rate makes them feel less miserable in their sufferings and more thankful for their comforts. Mr. Bost's Reports lead us to many sick-beds and death-beds which, in a most affecting way, confirm this observation. It is there shown how Christ is mighty to change a poor, weak, miserable child into a hero, fighting the hardest battle with unflinching courage, till it leaves the field as a conqueror.

In the case of the idiots, Mr. Bost tries to revive the intellect through the heart, and the heart through the love of God. It is a well-known truth, the force of which was felt by Mr. Bost from the commencement of his

work, that the heart has its reasonings, which reason itself cannot always understand.

The result has shown that a work carried on in this spirit is not in vain. I was quite astonished, when walking through the Establishments, to learn that those children, whose countenances bore evidences of a rational thinking mind, and who, though in an imperfect way, were able to understand and to reply to what was said to them, had entered the place in a brutish, and often lower than brutish state; and I was not less agreeably surprised on being told that, long before they could catch the idea of shifting a piece of wood from the left to the right, they had given evidence of being pleased by an act of kindness, and of being grateful for a benefit bestowed upon them. This shows that, when all the entrances to the human mind are locked, the door of the heart is the first that will open if gently and constantly knocked at. Nay, it appears tnat whereas, with human beings whose minds are in a sound state, the intellect often develops at the expense of the heart, with idiots, on the contrary, the heart often develops faster the more the intellect lags behind. Laforce has witnessed most touching proofs of this wonderful tendency of the human mind. One day, for instance, a poor girl, an object of the deepest commiseration, deaf, dumb, blind, paralytic, and epileptic, was brought to Bethesda. It required some courage to keep one's eyes fixed on the miserable creature, with her dried-up, contracted limbs, her repulsive face, the features of which were constantly contorted in the most hideous way. Well, an idiot too
guarded and nursed it, and sto

administer to it the last solace of love! And such was the indefatigable care, and even intelligent thoughtfulness with which she tended her poor helpless charge, that Mr Bost said, "When I lie on my death bed, I shall count it a blessing to be nursed in this way. I do not wonder at such hearts being able to understand what is the meaning of the simple sentence, "God loveth you," long before the intellect is able to catch the difference between two and three. Nor can I be surprised at what Mrs Castel told me, that the same children who do not know whether a shoe ought to be on the foot or on the head, or who if not prevented, would, like animals, walk on all fours, and lick the dirt, may yet sometimes be heard ejaculating, "*Mon Dieu! prends pitié de moi! J'en ai bien besoin!*"



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